PASHUPATINATH

Majupurias

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PASHUPATINATH

[The Divine Glory of the Guardian Deity of Nepal]

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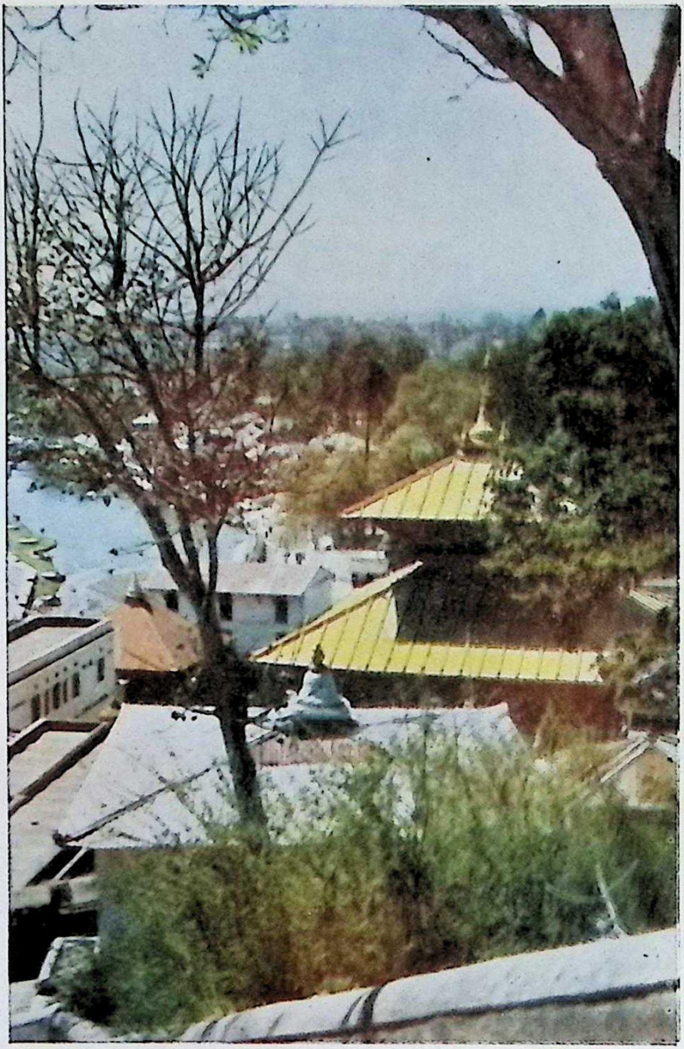
CONTENTS

1. Why this book ? ... 1
2. Nepal, a blessed land ... 4
3. Religious Importance of Pashupati Chetra ... 11
4. Significance of Pashupatipuri ... 14
5. Hindu Trinity ... 22
6. Shaivism, the cult of Shiva ... 38
7. Concept of Linga or phallus ... 43
8. Concept of Yoni (The Female Organ) ... 57
9. Origin of Jyotirlinga of Pashupatinath ... 62
10. Merits of bathing in the Bagmati or Shiva Ganga ... 69
11. Temple architecture in Nepal ... 75
12. An Insight into Temple of Pashupatinath (Deopatan) ... 85
13. Pashupati form of Shiva Linga ... 94
14. Facts and legends about Pashupatinath ... 100
15. Temples in the premises of Pashupatinath ... 108
16. Superb art in the premises of Pashupatinath ... 119
17. Methods of Worshipping ... 122
18. Some guide-lines for a *darshan* of Pashupatinath ... 129
19. Affinity between Pashupatinath and Kedarnath ... 134
20. Shankracharya and the priests of Pashupati ... 137
21. Temples in Deopatan ... 146
22. Gorakhnath Temple in Deopatan and precepts of Gorakhnath ... 163
23. Masterpieces of art in Deopatan ... 168
24. Gokarneshwar Temple-Ravana's place of penance... 174

25. Festivals observed in Deopatan ... 179
26. Pashupati Temple at Bhaktapur ... 186
27. Mahendreshwar or Pashupati temple at Hanuman Dhoka ... 189
28. Erotic Themes on Shaivite temples ... 193
29. Emblems of Shiva ... 196
30. Sacred flowers for Shiva Worship ... 202
31. Flowers tabooed for Shiva Worship ... 211
32. Sacred leaves for Shiva Worship ... 214
33. Rudraksha, the holy beads ... 221
34. Plants favourites of Shiva : (*a*) Marijuana or True Hemp. (*b*) Dhatura ... 234
35. Snakes, favourites of Shiva ... 242
36. Bull, the vehicle of Shiva ... 249
37. Abodes of Bliss or paradises ... 255
38. Shaligrama, the symbol of Shiva also ... 259
39. How to reach Kathmandu ? ... 262
40. Select References ... 268

"All my actions, Oh Pashupatinath are but offerings to thee."

Hail to Nepal, which is one of the most sacred places on the earth for Hindus—the only Hindu country in the world, where there is a galaxy of gods and goddesses. Similarly India is also a great religious eternal sanctuary. There are no boundries between Nepal and India in religion and culture. Traditionally, learned Brahmins from South India, initiated by *Pashupatastra mantra* are eligible for becoming priests at the Pashupatinath Temple of Nepal. Only the King of Nepal, popularly believed to be the incarnation of God and the pride and glory of the Hindus of the world can have access for worship to the *sanctum sanctorum* of the holiest temples of India where no body else, including the President and Prime Minister of India, is not permitted to go for performing the worship of the deity—a curious precedent as evidence of close cultural affinities between the two countries : Nepal and India, both having a unique culture and civilization based on the *Vedas*, *Puranas* and *Upanishadas*.



Scenic Grandeur of the Temple.

1

WHY THIS BOOK

Lord Pashupatinath is the guardian deity of Nepal which is predominantly a Hindu country. This holy land is the heart of two great religions—Hinduism and Buddhism. The benevolent King of Nepal always prays to Lord Pashupatinath for the welfare of his people and country. History points out that the temple of the Hindu deity was established in the 1st century, if not earlier. It is always the ambition of a Hindu to have *darshan* of the Lord. Thousands of Hindu pilgrims undertake long and strenuous journey from different places of Nepal and India for visiting this temple.

Lord Pashupatinath had been in our dreams since 1946. When we visited the temple in 1966 and had holy *darshan*, we thought one of the greatest ambitions in our life was fulfilled. Since then whenever we visited the temple, not only our hearts used to pulsate with a thrilling sense of joy and reverence but also we gradually came across some new things that went unnoticed earlier. We believe that there is definitely a sanctity about the place of worship and its environment. We do not entirely agree with those people who say that they can see by means of '*divya chakshu*' or clairvoyance all these things while sitting in their own places.

The temple of the Lord is a source of great celestial attraction not only for Hindus but for all the human beings on earth. Though entry to the main temple is not permitted to non-Hindus, they can definitely have a glance of the magnificance and beauty of the temple-complex from the east side. Whenever a pilgrim visits the temple, he is amazed at the grandeur of the temple and its pagoda style but misses several important details. The important temples, sculptures, metal art, etc. which are part and parcel of the temple-complex and are open to all the people are really masterpieces of the great art which flourished in the valley.

The whole area is of great historical importance. The complete zone is the specimen of great culture and art, and is a museum in itself. Several legends are related to the temple of the Lord which are very interesting and thought-provoking. The deity is reputed for its power to fulfil wishes and is considered to be the supreme of the supremes.

Every human action is directed by the Lord. Our aim is to bring to light several legends, history, sculptures and many other facts and myths about the temple, that had been lying unknown or unexplored since long. It is unbelievable that we were directed to work on this small venture by some supreme power in our dreams, when we were working in the United States. The destiny is irrevocable and irresistable. Though we were busy with some other projects we paused to carry out the divine instructions on writing about Pashupatinath to be followed later by books on *Swayambhunath* and *Muktinath*. In our book *'Glimpses of Nepal'*, the opening chapter is on the temple of Pashupatinath. Since then our interest in the temple has further risen.

There is no book written exclusively on Lord Pashupatinath. The literature is scattered in various epics and treatises viz., *Himvatkhand*, *Pashupatipurana*, *Shivpurana*, etc. At the outset the job of writing the book seemed to us to be a simple affair but the deeper one goes into the mysteries the one still finds more to be explored. We visited the temple several times and obtained information from several outstanding scholars. One of us (T.C.M) visited Kedarnath in Western Himalayas in India in the year 1980 and was astonished to find that not only in the legend both temples are close but the temple architecture of Kedarnath has a great deal of resemblance to Lord Pashupatinath. This further inspired us to bring to light valuable affinities of the two temples of Nepal and India.

We have particularly taken great care to give as much details as possible because every point will serve to shed light on one or another of its facets. Orthodox people do not allow to take out a piece of paper and a pencil for note-taking or sketching inside the Pashupati and other important temples. There are some repetitions in the legends which are required for articulating the sequence. Some legends are also given in somewhat modified ways as found in various treatises. The main purpose of writing this book is only to pay service to the Lord by penetrating into some of the unexplored recesses.

We are highly indebted to following reputed and revered scholars who always blessed us in our venture: *Pt. Padma Nabham Shastri*, Chief Priest, Pashupatinath temple, *Pt. Juna Nath Sharma*, *Bada Guruji*, Raj Durbar, *Mahant Khipranandii*, Chief Mahant, Gorakhnath temple, Kathmandu, *Shri Mangal Raj Joshi*, Campus Chief, Patan Campus, *Prof. Durga Prasad Dabari* and *Prof. Khem Raj Keshava Saran*, Institute of Sanskrit, Tribhuvan University, *Shri Janak Lal Shrestha*, National Archives, Kathmandu, and several other saints and seers.

The book is illustrated with several line drawings and photographs. We are highly obliged to Shri *G.S. Pradhan* for making the book presentable in this form. Our learned friend *Shri Ramesh Kumar Sharma*. Proprietor Sahayogi Press, prompted us to work on this project.

We are also indebted to our sister *Mrs. Shakuntala Devi* and our friend *Mr. Suraj Kapoor* who always inspired us to undertake this noble venture. Our son *Rohit* is also a blessing from Pashupatinath and he stimulated us to complete the project. Thus this small work is simply an oblation, we are paying to Lord Pashupatinath for His favour and magnanimity

The book is presented at the altar of the Lord on the day of *Shivaratri*, the festival in honour of Lord Shiva.

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&
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"Devout Hindus consider that after visiting all the four Hindu pilgrimages in India i.e., Badrinath, Jagannath, Dwarka and Rameshwaram their meritorious act is completed only when they have darshan of Lord Pashupatinath in Nepal'.

2

NEPAL— A BLESSED LAND

Nepal is like the crest jewel of the Himalayas or the abode of snow. It stands like the eternal sentinel of the Himalayas owing allegiance to Lord Shiva of Kailash on the north-east side and to Lord Buddha on the south side. Nepal is bounded on the north by snow-capped mountains ranging upto 8856 m. in altitude and on the south she overlooks the plains of Northern India with an intervening belt lying in the form of forests of the Terai.

On the west there is the river Mahakali, and on the east there is the river Mechi with its several tributaries. The biggest valley of the country, the Kathmandu valley, which is the holiest place in the country and which is the abode of gods and goddesses, is watered by the holy Bagmati.

Nepal has an ancient history of civilization. Lord Buddha, the messenger of peace, tolerance and compassion, was born in Nepal. The birth place of Sita, the consort of Lord Ram, which is a great pilgrim spot, is also in Nepal.

The Kingdom of Nepal which is roughly rectangular in shape is about 880 km. long from east to west and 144 to 240 km. wide from north to south. It has a total area of about 140,341 square kilometres. Its boundaries stretch up to Tibet (China) on the north and to India on the south, east and west. The Kathmandu valley, which covers an area of 451 square km., lies between the Sapta Gandaki in the west and the Sapta Kosi river basins in the east. The Kathmandu valley not only abounds with natural beauty and picturesque scenery but is also a centre of great cultural heritage. It was in the past a lake which later disappeared giving way to a wide valley.

According to the Hindu philosophy, when the universe came into existence three gods of Trinity: Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh appeared to take command of it. Brahma created land, mountains, seas and rivers. First of all the Sumeru mountain appeared followed by seven islands, seven seas, seven hills and fourteen *lokas* (world). The Sumeru mountain was lighted by the sun, moon, stars and other planets. Out of these seven islands, the best is the Jambu island where the holiest place Varanasi (India) stands, however, even one thousand times more sacred is the Pashupati area, which is located in Nepal. This is the version given in the *Himavat Khand* and the *Nepal Mahatma*.

Pashupatinath is one of the *Jyotirlingas* (resplendent linga) and the guardian deity of not only Nepal but of all the Hindu world.

According to one version, this universe was in a deluge. Both Brahma and Vishnu were dwelling on the water. A dispute arose between them over the question as to who was the creator of the universe. Vishnu said he was the creator while Brhma claimed that he was the creator. At this time, a dazzling *Jyotir linga* (resplendent linga) appeared and there was a divine oracle which said that any of them who would be able to find the origin and the end of the dazzling *linga* would be declared the creator. In this mission Brahma went to the heaven, and Vishnu to the hell. But Vishnu returned without any success and Brahma could not succeed either. But Brahma who preferred to tell a lie in order to save his face brought Kamadhenu (the celestial cow) and a flower named *Ketaki* (*Agave*) to bear witness in his favour. *Ketaki* falsely stated that it had offered the *bel* (*Aegle*) leaves on the vertical head of the *linga* and cow bore witness to the fact that she had eaten the *bel* (*Aegle*) leaves. At this there was another divine oracle to the effect that Brahma was not telling the truth and that the witnesses were bribed. Since then Brahma lost his prestige and was no more worshipped in his own rights, the mouth of the cow that uttered falsehood came to be regarded as unclean though the rear part where the tail with its swings contradicted what the mouth said remains holy, and *Ketaki* (*Agave*) flower became unacceptable to Shiva. Brahma took the penalty with calm and equanimity and both Brahma and Vishnu prayed in reverence to Shiva who was then in the form of cosmic *linga*. *Linga* was pacified by both Brahma and Vishnu and it shrank at the same spot to its normal size.

It is said that after thousands of years later, Kamadhenu, the celestial cow, used to come daily to this spot and offer milk to the *linga*. At this sight, curiosity led some foolhardy fellows to dig out this place but they all died as result of the cosmic radiation emitted by the *lingam*. Later, Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and Kubera came here and worshipped the *Jyotirlingam* (resplendent lingam). Then it was dug out by Holy beings for its worship. This holy place is the site of Lord Pashupatinath temple.

Some scholars do not include Pashupatinath into the commonly known twelve *Jyotirlingas* of India. However, others are also of the view that Pashupatinath is also one of the self-born or *adilingas*. The following is the list of 12 *Jyotirlingas* in India.

1. Kathiawar in Saurashtra —Somnath.
2. Shri Sail in Karnatak —Mallikarjuna
3. Ujjain (M.P). —Mahakala
4. Parli (Near Ahmednagar) —Vaidyanath
5. Dakini (Near Punne) —Bhim Shankar.
6. Setubandh —Rameshwaram.
7. Darukaban (Behind Ahmedabad) —Nageshwara.
8. Varanasi (U.P) —Vishweshwar (Vishwanath)
9. Gautami (Near Nasik) —Trimbkeshwar.
10. Himalaya. —Kedarnath.
11. Illapur (Ellora near Aurangabad) —Grishneshwar
12. Mandhatripur (an island in the river of the Narbada.) —Omkareshwar/Amleshwar

The importance of Nepal is beautifully described in the *Skanda Purana* which runs to several chapters. Saint Skand states that in the Himalayas there is most auspicious, boon-giving place called Nepal where Shankar in the form of Pashupati resides. This place is more sacred than thousands of pilgrim spots. This region has got several rivers of which the most sacred is the Bagmati and in the west of the river Lord Pashupatinath is occupying his seat. At this spot for many centuries, seers and saints performed meditation and got salvation and liberation. At this spot if any body takes a holy bath in the Bagmati, enchants *Rudra mantra*, worships Lord Pashupatinath with *panchamrita* (curd, ghee, sugar, honey and milk) the person becomes free from the bondage of births and rebirths. At this place the King of the Himalayas known as Himavan together with his wife Maina worshiped Pashupati. Pashupati blessed the King and said "Oh king of the Himalayas, Your region and Kingdom will remain the holiest and the most magnificent of all the mountains. Here *Kinnars* and *Gandharvas* (celestial musicians) will dwell. People will also inhabit this region and this area will always be like a *tapobhumi i.e.*, a place for penance and meditation. Those who will perform *tapa* (meditation) here will easily reap the fruit of their good deeds. Those who will climb the peaks of the Himalayas and will remain there will get fruits equivalent to that of performing *Vajpeya* and *Ashwamedha Yajna** (Horse sacrifice). They will become free even from the sins committed for seven generations and will go to heaven. Those people who will see the magnificent beauty of the Himalayas even from a great distance will become free from the sins they had perpetrated for one year. Maheshwar blessed the King Himavan and directed him to establish a *lingam*. King Himalaya worshipped the *lingam* and called it Himalayeshwar or Himvadishwar. Maina, the wife of the King Himavan also worshipped Guheshwari Devi. One day, Maina saw a goddess in the dream. She worshipped her. This goddess was in her most beautiful form. She was well adorned with ornaments and had three eyes. Maina prayed to the goddess to bless her with a similar daughter. She was blessed by the goddess and a daughter was born to Maina who is known as Sati or Parvati. She was married later to Lord Shiva. The Himalayas were the abode of all the life activities of Lord Shiva and Parvati and Nepal was the nucleus.

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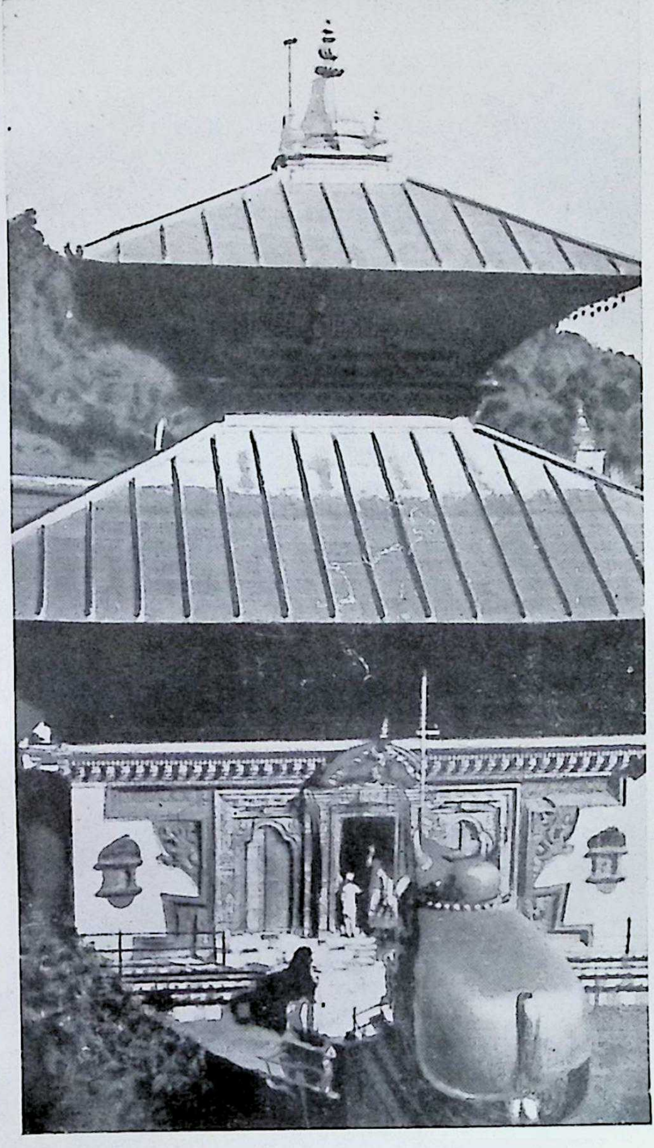
*Name of the most celebrated yajnas. Vajpeya can be performed in Kaliyuga.

In the chapter on *Nepal Mahatmya*, the *Skanda Purana* mentions that there was a great learned saint named 'Ne' who was the son of Marichika. 'Ne' was very kind hearted and good tempered. The saint performed special and unique meditation for 12 years in the place of *Tibrayogini* (Vajrayogini ?) The goddess Yogini became very pleased with the great devotion of the saint. Yogini blessed the saint and appeared before him. She asked the saint 'Ne' to protect this zone in the name of Pashupatinath for the preservation of religion. This area became a place of fame and pride in the three *lokas* (worlds) *i.e.*, *Swarga* (heaven), *Narak* (hell) and *Patal* (under world). Yogini also named the place as Nepal after the saint '*Ne*' and '*Pal*' means protection.

According to the *Himavat Khand* as already mentioned, out of the seven islands one island *Jambu* will become most famous and in the Jambu island *Kashi chetra* (Varanasi) will be a very sacred place of *moksha* (liberation). But in the *Pashupati chetra* people will get *dharma* (religion) *artha* (wealth), *kama* (pleasure) and *moksha* (salvation). Yogini further exhorted saint 'Ne' to worship Pashupati in this zone and to protect him. Later this place remained hidden in the water of the Bagmati for several years. Saint 'Ne' worshipped Pashupati in this area. Later on *devtas* (divine beings) established Nepal.

It is further described in the *Skanda Purana* that Nepal became a great place of happiness. This zone is very beautiful in the Himalayan mountains. Its significance and importance are many. Pashupati *Mahachetra* (big area), which has nature's beautiful gifts, is located among many peaks of the Himalayas. Nepal has become an important area associated with various places of worship which are of great significance. Nepal is the place where a large number of places of pilgrimage are centred in a small area and which is popularly known as the epicentre of gods and goddesses. Such an assemblage of gods and goddesses is found nowhere



The Supreme of Supremes.

else in the world. Hail to Nepal, the most sacred place on this earth. She is famous for gods like Kusheswar. Bhimeshwar, Bhimtirth, Bhimsen, Kafishwar, Kashyapeshwar, .Sphatikeshwar, Chandeshwar, Dhaneshwar, Vikateshwar, Indreshwar with Indrani, Tileshwar with Ganga and Saraswati, Champakeshwar, Rameshwar, Natrambeshwar, Kaleshwar, Ullalkeshwar, Gopaleshwar, Unmukteshwar, Nandikeshwar with Bhairavi, Gokhureshwar, Pandikeshwar with Bhavani, Kuteshwar, Maharudra with saints, Asteshwar, Bhairabeshwar, Brahmeshwar, Rudreshwar (Shivapureshwar), Kakeshwar, Manichureshwar, Yogeshwar, Naraineshwar, Jyotirlingeshwar, Bageshwar, Keeleshwar, Valmikeshwar, Mangaleshwar, Vimaleshwar, Ananteshwar, Vishwarupeshwar, Someshwar, Gobharateshwar, Bringakeshwar, Tilangeshwar, Kupiteshwar , Sarveshwar, Golkeshwar, Bharteshwar, Yaksheshwar, Chandeshwar, Dharmeshwar. Gokarneshwar, Kotishwar, Baneshwar, Gyaneshwar, Shaileshwar, Jaleshwar, Guheshwar, Kirateshwar, Jyotirupeshwar, Bhasmeshwar, Mandireshwar, Dikpaleshwar, Sidheshwar and Pashupatishwar are seated. Which is the place where one can see such a large galaxy of gods with their goddesses ? It is no where else than in Nepal that these great *pithas* (place of worship) are found. These deities bless the devotees with heavenly pleasure and *moksha* (liberation).

Hail to Nepal ! the place of wish-fulfilling and boon-giving deities, where millions of *lingas* are located. The holy place of great pilgrimage is virtue-giving. The sacred rivers expiate the sins. Those people who live in or visit Nepal are all to be worshipped. Even the unenlightend people who die in Nepal go to heaven without fail. The most sanctified and the holiest place on earth is Nepal.

Enlightened people who die in Nepal go to Shivalok, the heaven where Shankar or Shiva resides. Those people who take a bath daily throughout the month of *Kartika* (October/November) or *Chitra* (March/April) and worship various *lingas* will become united with Shiva. Their *punya* (virtues) become equivalent to the pious deeds of giving in charity the whole earth together with forests, mountains etc. The virtue obtained by having a *darshan* of the deity is similar to giving in alms all the cows of the world to the Brahmins and to thousands of sacred acts obtained by worshipping on this surface of the earth. The people who worship *lingas* get rewards of visiting 3½ crores of *Mahatirtha* (sacred places or pilgrimages). The people become free from their sins, and from the bonds of births and rebirths and go to Rudralok with their families in a chariot that shines like ten thousand suns. This is the place where they live in great rejoicings and happiness. If the people, it does not matter which part of the earth they are born in, live for knowledge, act with religion and die in Nepal they will acquire *Shivapada*-status commensurate with Lord Shiva. The *Skanda Purana* mentions that even those who read the *Purana* which describes the *Nepal Mahatma* attains a long life, a good name and a great deal of wealth.

"Nepal is studded with sacred places and the very soil in it is marked by sanctity, salvation, and beatitude for the pilgrims who visit it".

"Nepal is the abode of Gods and the theatre of wonders".

"In Nepal reside the *devas* (gods), *danavas* (demons), *gandharvas* (heavenly musicians), *apsaras* (dancers and courtesans), *brahmarishis* (sages) and *maharshis* (great sage) and *charanas* (bards). The sages continually sing and dance. Nepal abounds with all sorts of flowers, fruits and birds. Shiva sits enthroned on this fabulous of the North. He is surrounded and waited by the *Yakshas* and great number of spirit of different forms."

3

RELIGIOUS IMPORTANCE OF PASHUPATI CHETRA (KATHMANDU VALLEY)

In the seventy first chapter of the *Skanda Purana*, a great scholar Skand talking to Saint Agastya says that *Pashupati Chetra* is the place where one can get a daily dose of *dharma* (religion), *artha* (wealth), *kama* (pleasure) and *moksha* (liberation). The place from Koteshwar to Tileshwar is the place called Mrigendra Hill which provides *kama* (pleasure). The area between Vikateshwar to Chandra Bharteshwar is the excellent area. The place between the Yogdhara river beyond Vishnu *tirtha* provides *moksha* (liberation). The area between Godavari and Hari *tirtha* and beyond is the place of plenty. The place between these is the holiest and best *Pashupati chetra* where it is very easy to get *bhakti* (devotion) and *mukti* (liberation). This is the place where *Rudra** (Shiva) has practised meditation, said prayers, and sang devotional songs. This area is adorned by *Jyotirling.m* (resplendent) or Pashupatinath. In Nepal the most sacred place is *Umamaheshwara chetra*.

The zone between Vajrayogni and Pashupatinath is boon-giving and is the place of *siddhi* (supernatural powers). Whatever one wishes here, as it is said, will get fulfilled. Saints and seers who practise meditation here definitely achieve success. The place between Vishnu and Pashupati is called *Harihar chetra* where Shiva with the bull, and Vishnu with

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*Vedic name of Shiva.

Garuda are highly adored by those people who are engaged in religious aciivities.

People who are born here and die in Pashupatinath area live a happy life with Lord Shiva in their next life. Hail to the land of Pashupati where *devtas* (divine beings) consider all the inhabitants as *gana* (attendants) of *Maheshwar*. In this *Shiva chetra*, Vishnu also practised great meditation to get Lakshmi. He was crowned with success after one year only though the great and pious effect of the place had expedited the process. Brahma created three sacred ponds for the welfare of the people. Saints also worshipped Lord Shiva in this valley. This is also the place of meditation and intensive worship performed by Daksha, the *Prajapita* and great seer Markandey. The eight *chiranjivis* (who are prayed to for long life) named : Ashwtthama, Bali, Vyas, Hanuman, Vibishan, Kripacharya, Parashuram and Markandey practised great meditation. Marichi, Angira, Pulastya, Pulah, Kriti, Bhrigi and Atri saints always worshipped Maheswara in a big style in the Pashupati area. This area is, and will always be, considered as one known for wish-fulfilling and boon-giving in the world.

This most sacred spot of Pashupati is Shleshamantak forest. God is associated here with Gopal *Siddh Gan* (accomplished attendant). Here *Vinayak* (Ganesh) and *Chetrapal* (Nandi, etc.) give constant company. In this area the *Guhya* named Yogini Devi is present. In this Pashupati *chetra*. Guheshwari, Brahmi, Maheshwari, Kaumari, Varahi, Narsinghi and Shivdhatri always adorn the place. Millions of *devtas* (divine beings) and deities are always protecting the ten directions of this zone. The *ganas* (attendants) of Pashupati are always guarding this area. The entrance of this area is always guarded by Ganesh. Wishfully *Chetra*-deities are also living here. Batsala Devi together with her *gan* (attendant) is always seated here. Mangala Devi is also present for doing *mangal* or welfare for the people. Wishfully goddess Shri Raj rajeshwari* together with her *gana* (attendant) also lives here. Here

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*There is a magnificent temple dedicated to this goddess on the bank of Bagmati near the public funeral *ghats*.

various ponds exist in which people after seeing their shadows become aware of their future**. These ponds were built by Brahma. The moon, the deity for mercy and forbearance, always lives here. Anant, together with his family, has its abode here in the position of devotion. Deities together with their families live in this area. Dantpani stays here happily. Varuna together with his *gan* (attendant) always resides here. Bagheswari with his *gan* (attendant) is also present. Besides Narain, Ganesh, Nandkeshwar, Kuber, Yoginis, and other gods and goddesses are always present for services of Shankar or Shiva. Therefore this area is famous for *moksha* (liberation). Indra, Agni, Yam, Niriti, Varuna, Vayu, Kubera and Ishan also live here. In the four directions of Pashupati, eight Bhairavas named Unmatta, Asintank, Ruru, Kal, Sangharak, Krodh, Anand, Chand are always present with their *Shaktis* (consorts) and *Gans* (attendants) for protecting and guarding the auspicious place. In this *Pashupati Chetra*, the famous and dear friend of Shankara named Vasuki is always present.

The devotees get the fruits of their worship only first having the *darshan* of Vasukinath and then Pashupati. This *Pashupati Chetra* is the town and temple of deities of wishfulfilment and *moksha* (salvation). This *Pashupatipuri* is for protection of religion and owing to the great effect of Rudra (Shiva) sins are always expiated.

The *Pashupati Chetra* or Kathmandu valley is thus a great religious centre and there is no unfitting place within the confines of the valley which extends between Chandragiri and Mahadev Pokhri in the east and between Shivpuri and Phulchowki from north to south. In the valley there are three cities : Kathmandu, or Pashupatipuri which bears its name for its beauty, Patan (Lalitpur) known for its art, Bhaktapur (Bhadgaon) known as a place of devotees.

"Non-initiated Hindus consider that sacred *mahatmyas* (imports) were composed and inserted in some of the *puranas*, especially in the *Skanda Purana* making a god or holy sage praise a particular spot intended to be elevated to a hallowed place.

**Matatirtha sthan is near Thankot. People come to take bath and offer oblations there in memory of their mothers on the last day of dark fort-night of April/May.

4

SIGNIFICANCE OF PASHUPATI PURI (KATHMANDU)

It is described in the *Skanda Purana* that those religious visitors who first of all bow down with great devotion to this *Puri* and then have *darshan* of Pashupatinath, will have their wishes fulfilled and will achieve the goal. Thus the Pashupati *Puri* is Kathmandhu itself, the city of temples and visit to the place blesses the devotees with *kama* (pleasure) and *moksha* (liberation). Hey! Saint Agastya this *Pashupatipuri* or Kathmandu always protects religion and all the sins are atoned for by the great and auspicious effect of Lord Shiva. *Pashupatipuri* is a very sacred place. Hail Pashupatipuri! it is the most sacred land in which *Gan* (attendants), *Shaktis* and *Devtas* live together with Lord Shiva himself. This land blesses its inhabitants with several boons. In this land of about 12·8 Km. in area there is a deposit of gold. It is situated in the lap of the Himalayan mountain. The city lies in the centre of a valley which is similar to a thousand petalled lotus. In the centre of it, Lord Shiva himself resides. It is, therefore, called Maheshwaripuri also. No words of praise are too great for this land. Lord Shiva himself blesses the inhabitants of this city and the valley has all the things required not only by deities, and religious minded people, but also by demons and bad souls. This land is full of *lingas* and therefore, gives liberation. Even those people who live in heaven have the ambition of coming down to the earth in this land of Shiva, Pashupatipuri or Maheshwarapuri. Lord Shiva and Uma in their real anthropomorphic forms lived in this beautiful, picturesque place. It is very difficult to be born in this land which is best in *Trailokya* i.e., three *lokas* ; heaven, hell and earth. This land is adored by Lord Pashupatinath. :No words of appreciation are adequate for this sacred place. As already said, the *Himavat Khand* describes that in the *Jambu* island is *Kashipuri* (Varanasi) and *Pashupatipuri* (Kathmandu), Lord Shiva has himself resided in his anthropomorphic form. The importance of *Pashupatipuri* is just four times that of *Kashipuri*. Therefore, this city is excellent in the world. The *Lingam* of Lord Pashupati is on the south of Himalaya, it is called *Uttarkashi* (North Kashi) as it is situated in the north of region of the river Ganges and in the Himalayas. Lord Shiva never leave this area even for a moment. Vaman, Gaureshwar, Vasuki, Brahma also graciously adore this town. This city of Lord Shiva is very dear to him. Even by *Namaskar* to this land people get *mukti* (liberation). The inhabitants of this land are considered by the people living in heaven as *gana* (attendant) of Lord Maheshwar. In this area, saints and seers move about freely. People always regard them as followers of Shankar. Hail to the people of this land as they are without sins. Even *devtas* (divine beings) regard the inhabitants of this sacred land as blessed by Shiva, three-eyed with a trident (*trishula*) a flag in hand, a bull as the conveyance and the moon in the hair-bun. *Devtas* (divine beings) of heaven wish to live in this city together with Rudra or Shiva. Only those people can be born here or visit this place who by living in other areas accumulate virtues earned over millions of birth circles. Learned scholars are of the opinion that even other living beings, viz., trees, animals, insects, etc. get liberation in this land. The bad souls born in this land are born as Brahmins in their next life and achieve holy position. Even morose become free from troubles in this Kingdom of Pashupati. Those people who do not take a bath in the holy Bagmati and do not have a *darshan* and worship Pashupati are animals who will always remain in extreme trouble, and move about in this land in great miseries. The *Himavat Khand* mentions that if those people who live in distant places and can not visit *Pashupatipuri* say prayers facing towards the place where the Bagmati flows and where Guheshwari and Lord Pashupatinath stand along with their *gans* (attendants) get salvation. Those people who even enchant the name of Pashupatinath get the fruits of visiting this place. Those, people who spell the word Nepal either in ignorance or knowingly become free from sins. Those who die in this land go to Shiva Lok by the grace of Lord Pashupatinath. The sins of those people who speak *Pashupati nagri* and Pashupati are condoned. Those people who may live anywhere in this world but enchant the name of Pashupati without any evil thoughts in mind are liberated without any doubt. Even those devotees who speak 'Pashupati' either by fear or in devotion become free from bondages of births and rebirths. Lord Shiva protects those people who speak the name of Pashupati in misery, in sickness and in the battlefield.

Those people who live in distant places but visit this place once in their life time, and have the *darshan* of Pashupati earn virtues equivalent to perfoming holy deeds. These virtuous deeds are equal to all *yajnas* (sacrifices), all pilgrimages, fasting, praying, etc. Those people go to *Shivalok* riding on a chariot that shines with a light as bright as that of ten thousand Suns. Those people achieve all the four things in life *i.e. dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, *moksha* and earn a great deal of wealth.

Hail to this land of Pashupati, where Pashupati is dazzling like gold heated in the fire. In this land of gold, the golden bright Shiva *lingam* is giving light both by day and by night. In the heart and mind of ascetics, this light is always present. Those people who have light in their heart, that is to say who are enlightened and have a *darshan* of Pashupati are really fortunate.

Salute to the inhabitants of this Pashupati Nagri who can have darshan of Lord Pashupati easily which even saints and seers can not have, inspite of the troubles they take. *Pashupatipuri*, where there is the sacred *lingam* and the sacred Bagmati is better than Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar, Kashi, Kanchi, Awantika (Ujjain), Dwarika, etc. In the *Satyuga** Kashi ; in *Dwapar*, Ananti ; in *Tretayug*, Haridwar and Ayodhya and in *Kaliyug*, Mathura and Dwarika provide *moksha*. Out of

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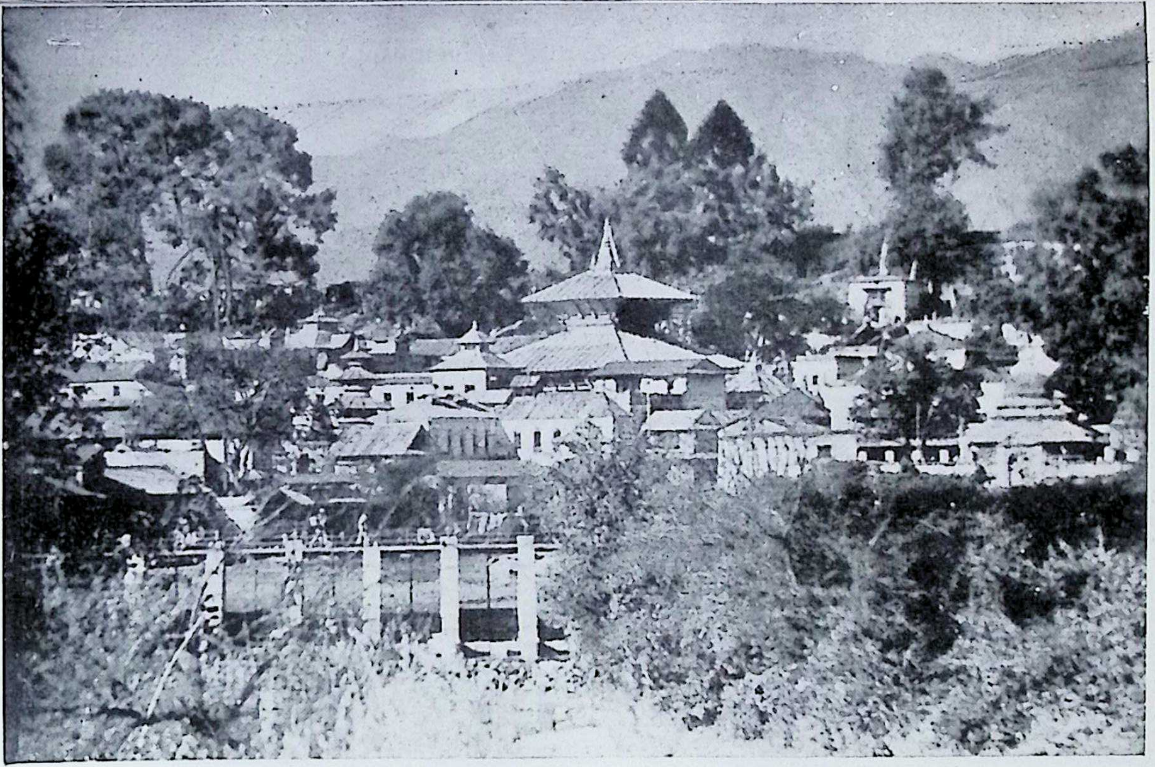
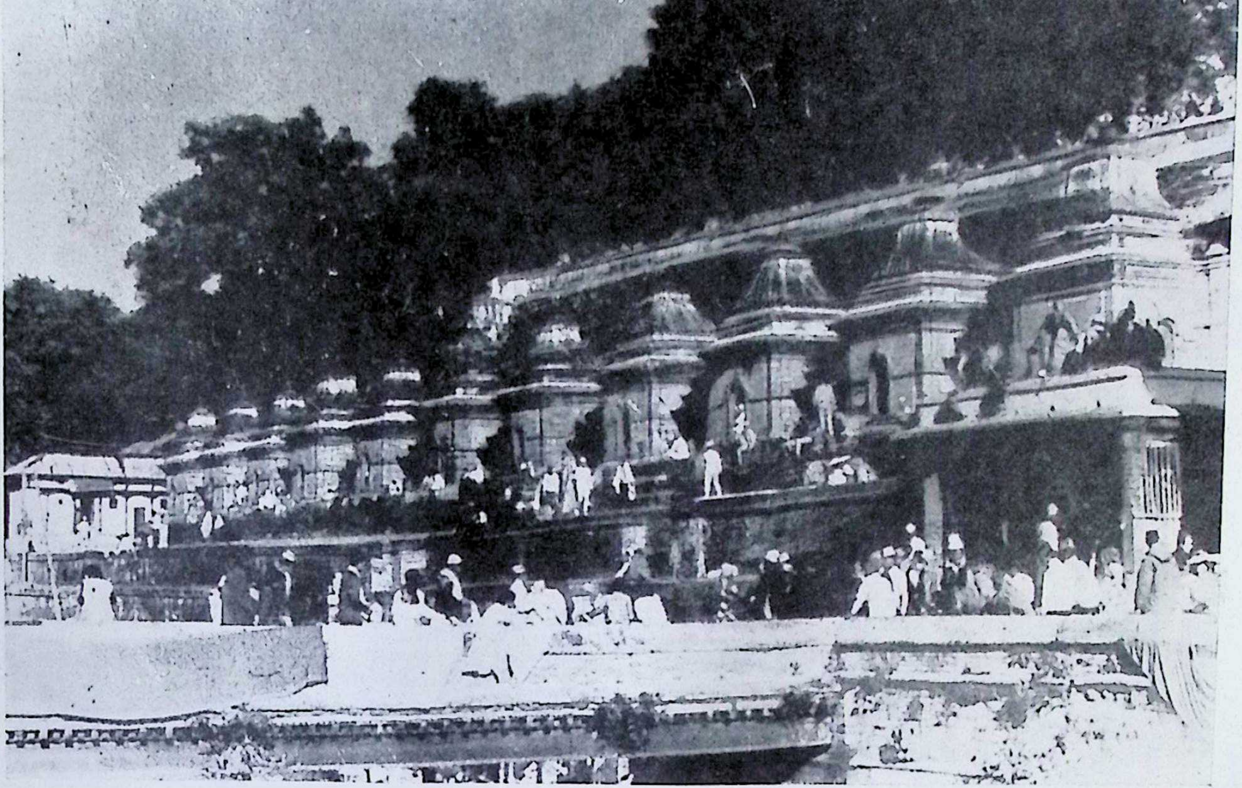
*Ages ; Described in Chapter-5



Magnificent view of Pashupati and its environ.



Shiva temples on left bank of the Bagmati.

all these *Puris* (towns and cities) the most sacred and the boon and fruit giving is *Pashupatipuri*. In *Satyuga*, Satyavati in *Treta*, Tapovati, in Dwapar, Mukti, and in *Kali Yuga* Nepal is the most famous land. In the town of Pashupati on the east side there flows the famous river Bagmati which is known as Shiva Ganga also. There is no place like *Pashupatipuri* or *Uttarkashi* in the world. The land is described as the Kingdom of Pashupati and even upto this day the king rules over this land on behalf of Lord Pashupati.

Regarding the significance of Pashupatipuri (Kathmandu) another very interesting description is given in the *Himvat Khanda*. Skanda mentions that there was a king named Devidas who was ruling over the very beautiful Uttkalpuri (Assam, India). The king was a saint and remained always busy with sacred acts. He gave all the Kingdom to his son and went to Neel Parvat in the Himalayas. There he started meditation always remembering *Kamaksha*, the Goddess of Assam (India). The King practised meditation for 12 years. Later he met a Brahmin bachelor named Jagishwa who was also worshipping Maheshwari. The Brahmin told the King that he should always pray to the God in Brahma-Lok after taking a bath every day. He further said that he should worship and remember *Sanatan* (eternal) Rudra. The King said that it was his greatest fortune to meet the Brahmin. Jagishwa said 'Oh King, you are very wise and you are the son of Devi and the incarnation of God and himself Yogeshwar'. Goddess Jagadambika had given you *dibyachachhyu* (divine eyes)" The Brahmin requested the King that there is a very famous *siddhipitha* (consecrated supernatural place) named Nepal where there is *mahachetra* (big area) of Pashupati. The King asked the *Siddhu* (accomplished) Yogeshwar to take him to Nepal where Pashupati is located. The King said that it was now his greatest ambition in a life to have a *darshan* of the sacred Maheshwar *chetra*. The Brahmin and the King prayed to Kamaksha,* the goddess of Assam (India), and reached *Sidha chetra* (Nepal) via Neelachal mountain to Manihridya. Both these *Yogis* saw this land of Pashupati. The interesting description is worth-mentioning here. The whole mountainous area was with *lingas* and Vishnu together with Gods and Goddesses who were also living there. Both these saints started praying in this land of Pashupati. Both the *Yogis* (saints) said *Namaskar* (salute) to Vishnu, Devi, Krishna, Shankar, Parmeshwari, Rudra and Arya. After the prayers Jagishwa told the King that this Nepal is with Vishnu owing to his presence. The King said that Nepal is the land of Shankar as it is full of *lingas*. The King said that He saw this world pervaded by Shankar. This area is blessed with the presence of Goddesses. Yognis have adopted the mountains and the land of this area. Such discussions were going on between the King and the Brahmin, at the same time Vasudeva (Vishnu) appeared at the spot. Vasudeva said, "Oh sons ! first of all salute to Vajrayogini after taking a bath in the Vimala river (Salti ?) and pray to Vimaleshwar. Later on worship Haripriya and Pashupati." Vasudev further directed the saints that everything is visible from that mountain. These saints worshipped and took a bath in the month of *Pausha* (Dec./January) on the day of a black fortnight (year not known). They saw the whole of this land adored by Vishnu, Lakshmi, other gods and goddesses. Rudra, Mahisasur, Durga, Bhagwati, Yoginis, living beings and saintly persons. Both the king and the Brahmin were surprised and thought of returning home. But they were unable to move. They remembered all gods and goddesses. At the same time Vasudev said that they were intending to return without saying *Namaskar* to 'Ne' saint. Therefore, their bodies became powerless. Vasudev directed both the persons to say salute to 'Ne' saint, Ganesh, and all the *Chetrapals* (guardians) and to worship Pashupati, Mangala-Gauri, Vatsala-Gauri and Guha-gauri. Those saints later prayed to and worshipped Jagadamba and circumambulated Vajreshwari mountain and saluted 'Ne' saint. 'Ne' saint blessed both of them. Both the persons expressed to 'Ne' the ambition of paying *darshan* to Pashupati and Guheshwari. The saint accompanied them and took them to the pilgrim spot after taking the *Tirtha Jal* (sacred water) and allowing them to have a *darshan* of Nandi, Vasuki, Bhuvneshi, Shiva, Durga, Guheshwari and other *Siddha devtas* (accomplished saints). Later they had *darshan* of Pashupati and became very happy. They prayed to Rudra, Brahma, Shiva, Ishan and Jagatguru. Both the King and the Brahmin stayed in the *Pashupati chetra* for a night. (Nepalese believe that one should stay in pilgrim spots for a night.) The King expressed his desire to return but the Brahmin told the King that it was useless to return to their ancestral city. The Brahmin showed the place of *Gokarna* where Ravana, the King of Lanka, practised meditation. By the *darshan* of Gokarna-Linga, one gets salvation, the other *pitha* (accomplished spot) is also for wishfulfilling. They saw Lakshmi, Jaya, Vijaya, Hari, Gayatri and Saraswati. Both of them saw the place near Gokarna where Brahma also practised meditation. They saw seven islands and seas around it. They saw the rivers, Bagmati, Ratnadhara, Vridha-ganga, Prabhavati, Indramaya, Vishnupadi ond other seas. The King saw Kameshwari, Brahma, Vishnu, Indra, deities and persons also worshipping Kamaksha (Goddess) of India. The King also saw several goddesses like Dakshinyani (Dakshinkali), Guhyakali, Girija, Shubhadra, Kali, Ambika, Bhadrakali, Aparna, Shivani, Ishwari, Chandlika, Mohratri, Sunanda, Jayanti, Singhavahini, Kumari, Bhagwati, Uma, Amba etc. All the devotees were praying in this land. Then the King realised that there is no place in the world better than Nepal for human welfare and for atonement of sins. He decided not to leave this sacred place either by his body or mind. The Brahmin also decided to remain at this place as this life is short and it is no good to leave sacred places. Both the King and the Brahmin decided to serve Lord Pashupatinath, Vishnu, Brahma and Guheshwari. They decided not to leave the place where the holy Bagmati flows. They decided that this Maheshwar *Chetra* is the crown-crest of the world and provides *dharma* (religion), *artha* (wealth), *Kama* (pleasure) and *moksha* (liberation). Both these saintly persons, i.e., the King and the Brahmin inhabited this land of Pashupati. Thus this Nepal *Chetra* became inhabited by saints and religious minded people owing to its sacredness and holiness.

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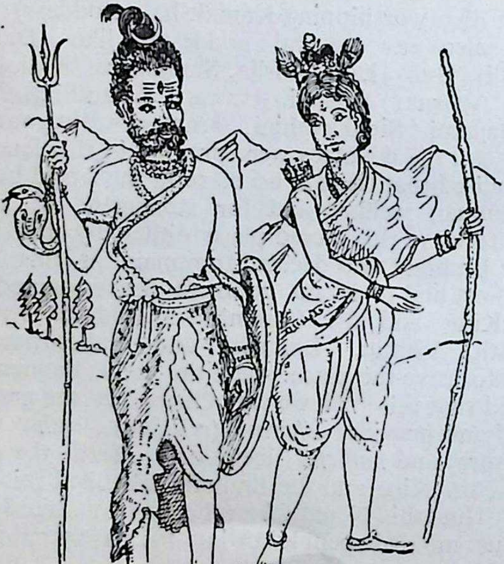
*She is regarded in Nepal also as one of the most powerful goddess.

The ruler King is considered as the incarnation of God in Nepal and since time immemorial, the King has ruled in this land. There is a belief among religious people that if there is no king in this country there will be disaster and great deluge. Since then in Nepal, sacredness and Kingship have become synonymous.

Just for the inquisitive people, it will not be out of place to mention that nothing is known about the history of Kathmandu or *Pashupatipuri* before the year 723. Even the *Vamshavalis*, are silent on this point. Some credit Gunkama with the foundation of Kathmandu in the year 723. However, other scholars contradict this view. Landon (1928) writes, "To anyone who knows the valley it is clear that accurate information about the foundation of such a town is practically impossible. Kathmandu undoubtedly existed as a riverside hamlet long before the wooden house (*Kasthamandap*) was built or a king designed to hold court there. It is manifestly impossible that in a valley so thickly peopled with villages



Shiva and Parvati in Kirant form in Nepal the well-watered terrain by the Vishnumati and within an hour or two's walk of both the religious centres of Swayambhunath and Pashupatinath should have remained immune from being colonized. The mere fact that it stands precisely between these holy places is enough to have invested it with importance and a population long before any official date connected with its foundation is determined."

"Some people wrongly say that the founders of Hinduism have fabricated several stories to mislead the people."

"Legends and mythological stories lend credibility to rituals."

5

HINDU TRINITY

Although the Hindus believe in one god, they also conceptualise several other deities and semi-gods that are created by the Almighty as a ceaseless process.

There are three major deities in Hinduism that are identified for their fundamental qualities. However, a deity may take the form and duties of another also or even of one with opposite qualities. Every god possesses more than one quality. For example, Shiva can also become the creator and Vishnu the destroyer in some cases.

There are some features in all major deities. Many of them possess multiple heads and hands, which are evidence of their super-human powers. All the male deities have got their consorts. Major deities have animals as their vehicles or *vahanas* for travelling.

Hindus hold that the supreme Being can only be concieved in the abstract by the intellectually or spiritually gifted people. Laymen worship him in various forms. In view of these different attributes of the supreme being is represented by different deities. The cycle of life involves creation preservation and destruction. Therefore, in Hinduism, three major deities are identified.

Brahma—The Creator.
Vishnu or Madhava—The Preserver
Shiva or Mahesha—The Destroyer.
The three deities are called 'The Hindu Triad'.

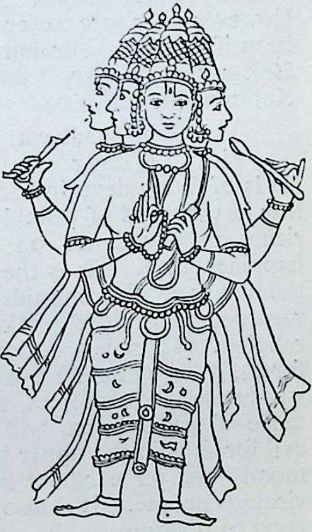
Brahma, The Creator :

In Hindusism, Brahma is the lord of creation. He was born from a golden egg. He has four heads, each one looking towards one of the directions—the East, West, North and South. The four heads represent the four qualities of the earth. Brahma is regarded as the god of wisdom. He carries the *Vedas*, the books of wisdom and learning, in one of his four hands. Sometimes, he also carries a water-jug which symbolizes prosperity. He also holds, in one of his hands, a string of pearls or a sacrificial spoon which is symbolic of his spiritual nature. The fourth hand is generally raised to indicate blessings or fulfilment of wishes. The consort of Brahma is Saraswati, the goddess of wisdom. A goose is the vehicle or *vahana* of Brahma.

In the Hindu trinity, Brahma has somehow lost his position among the worshippers and is normally not regarded as important deity for worship.

The *Purana* describes that Brahma's age is one hundred years. Once created, the world remains unchanged for one day of Brahma, a period of 2,16,000,000 years for human beings. Each day in Brahma's year is known as *Kalpa* and consists of 4,320,00,000 years of earth. Each *Kalpa* is further divided into 1000 *Mahayugas* or *Great ages*. Each great age or *Mahayuga* is again divided into the following four *Yugas* :

1. *Krita Yug*
2. *Treta Yug*
3. *Dwapara Yug*
4. *Kali Yug*.



Brahma, the creator

Some sanskrit books describe that Brahma had five faces but one was chopped off by lord Shiva in a quarrel with him.

In the first *Yug* or the age, good prevails while in the second evil finds it way into the world and get an edge over the good until in the *Kali age* evil dislodges the good. At the end of the fourth age, it is believed, the world will be destroyed by *Kalki* and only sages, gods and the principles of elements will survive. Brahma sleeps during the night but when he awakes, he again starts his work of creating things and living beings and this process is repeated until He completes His hundredth year.

Brahma is fifty years old at present and the world is about half way through *Kali Yug*. *Brahma's* life lasts for one hundred years. When this period is over, Brahma himself will cease to exist. All gods, sages and the universe will disintegrate only to be absorbed by the constituent elements.

In Nepal there is no temple dedicated to Brahma. However, there are several beautiful sculptures of Him. A beautiful image of Brahma is in the Gokarneshwar temple at Gokarana and also at the Pashupatinath temple complex in Kathmandu.

Vishnu or Madhava, the Preserver :

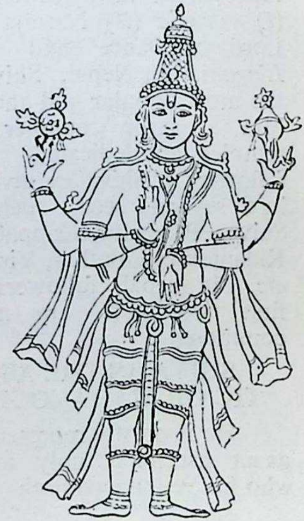
Vishnu is regarded as the preserver of the moral order. He is of living devotion and is not a god that strikes awe or fear in the mind of worshippers. He is a deity who bestows riches in abundance on his worshippers. Vishnu confers happiness also. He is the preserver of the cosmic order and the universe. He upholds *dharma* or religion. Vishnu is regarded to be closely linked up with the world, action and religion. There is a notion that in this earth there are both forces, good and evil at work and there is a constant tug-of-war between these forces, which over the long cycle of the existence of the universe will balance. H wever, some times, evil forces gain the upper hand. For establishing the rule of moral laws on earth, Vishnu intervenes on behalf of the virtuous people. It is also regarded that evil must exist for good to operate.

Vishnu is depicted with four hands. He has in his hands those objects which are either weapons or ornaments. He is some times represented as one in a sofa reclining made of a multi-headed (*Anatanag*). In one of his hands, he holds a conch shell or *sankha* which is an auspicious object. The shell is symbolic of female fertility. In the next hand, the holds a discus or *sudarshan-chakra* which is a fiery weapon and is considered to be a sun-disc. Another hand holds a club or *gada*. In the fourth hand, he holds a lotus flower or *padma* or *Nelumbium speciosum*. When Vishnu awakes from his long sleep, a lotus grows from his navel. From this flower, the four-faced Brahma comes into existence, who remains seated in it and gets engaged in the creation of the world. Among the other weapons of Vishnu we sometimes find a plough, the implement associated with agriculture and fertility of the soil.

Vishnu wears a brilliant, breast-jewel *Kaustubhamani* around his neck. This jewel emerged during the churning of the ocean. It is a powerful and miraculous gem which is called the essence of the oceans. On the chest of Vishnu, there is a particular curl of hair which is regarded as the outward token of his being the universal sovereign of man. It is called *Srivatsa*, having nine angles. Vishnu is also sometimes depicited on a lotus with his consort, Lakshmi, the goddees of fortune. Sometimes, Vishnu rides on his vehicle, Garuda, the mythical animal.

Karapatri (1941-42) describes in the *Sri Vishnu Tattva* that the chariot of Vishnu represents the mind with the power of action. The Mahabharata says, "His chariot moves at His own will, like the swift mind, phenomenon of god's multiformity, metamorphosis and reincarnation itself". It is described that, when religion is not followed, Vishnu appears on earth in one of incarnations for the rescue of the good, for the preservation of the world and its culture, and for the destruction of evil-doers and for the establishment of faith.

Lord Krishna one of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu in the Gita eloquently pronounces : "Whenever there is decay of righteousness, O ! Bharata and there is exaltation of unrighteousness, then I myself



Vishnu, the preserver

come forth. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age".

In Nepal, there are some large temples dedicated to lord Vishnu. He is very popularly called Narayan in Nepal. Several icons of Vishnu are found in Nepal. Of the several temples of Vishnu in Nepal four are most notable : Changu Narain, Vishanku Narain, Sikha Narayan and Inchangu Narain.

Vishnu is also represented in Nepal in the form of *Dattatrey*, in which he is depicted as trinity-in-one (In Bhaktapur, there is a famous temple of Dattatreya).

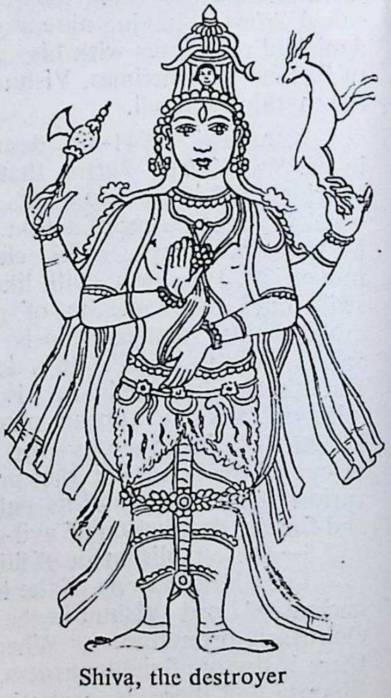
There are about 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu. Some scholars describe more than 10 incarnations.

SHIVA OR MAHESHWARA, THE DESTROYER :

Shiva is the lord of destruction. According to the *Shiva Purana*, he performs all the three functions of creation, protection, and destruction. He is generally represented in three forms : (*i*) Ascetic (*ii*) Natraja or Lord of Dance and (*iii*) *Lingam*. In Nepal, Shiva is the most popular god and to him a large number of temples are dedicated. The followers of Shiva are divided into several sects such as Saiva, Pasupata, Kappalika, Kalamukha Lakulisa, Virasiva etc. In Nepal, followers of first two sects are most common.

SHIVA AS THE ASCETIC OR MAHAYOGI :

He is mostly represented as an ascetic, a holy man, who has renounced both the



Shiva, the destroyer

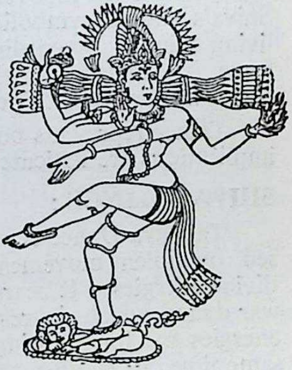
joys and pains of the materialistic world. He plays destructive roles with dispassion. Shiva performs the destruction without feeling either and pleasure or pity. Shiva has got 'Yogic' austerities. He is of fair complexion and his throat is of blue colour. Along with four arms, he possesses a third eye also. He holds a trident or *trisula*, a mini-drum or *damru* sometimes a bow and a club with a skull attached to it. His garlands are of snakes and the necklace of several skulls make him look quite terrific in forbearance.

Shiva has got several names or epithets. The vehicle of Shiva is Nandi, the bull. The consort of Shiva is the Shakti, represented in various benevolent and terrific aspects.

SHIVA AS GOD OF DANCE OR NATRAJA :

Shiva dances both in joy and in sorrow. His cosmic dance represents the eternal flux as well as the orderly movement of the universe. While this dance keeps going, this cycle of creation and destruction runs through its cosmic course. Shiva's dance indicates that all existence is transitory and the old gives way to the new. The pose of dancing Shiva depicits the unity of the functions of creation, preservation and destruction. It is considered that dancing is an ancient form of magic. The dancer is endowed with super -natural powers. His personality is transformed. Dance induces dazed and abstracted or exalted state. It is instrumental in having an experience of the divinity, in the realization of one's own secret nature and in its ultimate merger into the divine essence. Dancing is thus an equally important part of life as meditation, fasting, breathing exercises and absolute introversion. Dance is also regarded as an act of creation. It gives the dancer a new and higher personality.

Natraja is the dancing manifestation of the cosmic dancer. The large circle of flames in which Shiva dances depicts the rhythmic



Shiva as Natraja

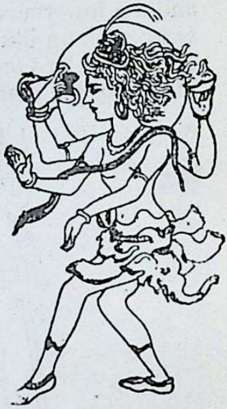
play, the source of all motions in the universe. As he dances Shiva balances himself with one foot on dwarf of ignorance in complete carelessness or forgetfulness as if he is led away by the music he has produced.

The other foot is raised in a dancing pose. According to Zimmer (1965), this symbolizes the continuous circulation of consciousness into and out of ignorance. This foot indicates that there is a way out and we are not bound to remain ignorant. This foot indicates liberation from illusion also. In the upper right hand, he has a small drum or *damaru*. It represents the sound as the first step in the manifestation of the universe and also symbolizes the rhythm of creation. In the upper left hand, there is a ball of flames, which symbolizes the world's final destruction as a supernumerary to the next process of creation. Forms are continuously created and destroyed but the essential energy of the universe continues. The lower right hand is in *abhaya mudra* (teaching pose) and it is interpreted as implying "Do not be afraid, there is a way out which is possible only through me". This hand leads in a rhythmic line direct to the lower hand which shows us the way out which means release from ignorance. On the matted locks of hairs are represented the river goddess Ganga and the crescent moon. They represent the parts of the larger universe. The dance took place not in darkness but in moonlight, that is the first radiance of creation. The serpent on Shiva's body is symbolic of the life-forces that underline all living beings. According to the Yoga philosophy, the life-force is *Kundalni* in the human body the practice of this *Kundalni Yog* leads to perfection and attainment.

Dance represents both creation and destruction. The two implications are indicated in one dance.

SHIVA'S DANCE :

Tandava Dance is performed by Shiva. It is characterised by violent movements in a fit of frenzy which sheds off divine energies. It bears a trait suggestive of some cosmic war dance which is responsible for generating destructive energies and for inspiring awe in the minds of foes. At the same time, it is also the triumphant dance of the victor. Shiva conqured a great demon who assumed the shape of an elephant. Shiva performed his wonderful dance to punish ten thousand heterodox hermits also living in the forest. According to one legend, Shiva went to the forest with Vishnu. He was himself in the guise of a Brahmin and Vishnu in the guise a beautiful woman named Mohini, as his wife. Shiva blazed up in anger when he saw the *rishis* (saints) rallying round Mohini and went to the extent of killing the Brahmin so that they will be free with his wife. According to another legend, the wives of the *rishis* fell in love with Shiva and thus it aroused the violent anger of the *rishis*. They set a ferocious tiger at him but Shiva tore off its skin and used it. A formidable serpent was also set to kill Shiva, but he killed it and used it as his neckband. A mighty elephant was then sent which Shiva ripped open and used its hide for a couch. He was attacked by Mauyalka or Muyalka, the *asura* Apasmara. Shiva placed him under his feet and danced his horrible *tandava* upon his prostate body. It is said that the *rishis*, gods, celestial and infernal worlds assembled to see him dance with the result that all became his devotees and followers.



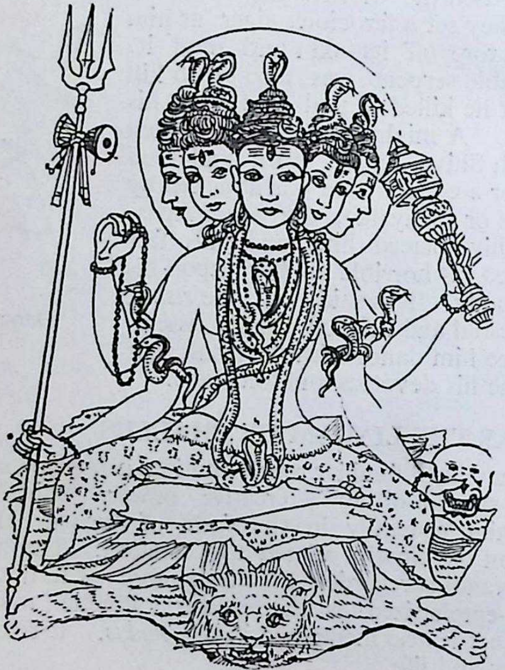
Dancing Shiva

SHIVA AS THE LINGAM OR PHALLUS :

Shiva's most familiar representation is *lingam* or phallus. It is the symbol of god's creative power. Shiva's devotees worship him generally in the form of *lingam*. His act of destruction is closely related to creation. The vehicle or *vahana*, Nandi is regarded as the symbol of fertility and his role is re-emphasized as the creator. Phallic worship as a religious act is also mentioned in the *Vedas*. It is the symbol of fertility and life.

SHIVA AS PASHUPATI :

Shiva in his gentle aspect is known as *Pashupati*, a herdsman or the lord of animals. Zimmer (1965) writes that all beasts (*pasu*) are of his flock, both the wild and the domesticated. Furthermore, the souls of all men are the cattle of this Divine herdsman. This tender symbol of herdsman is represented in *Pashupati* and is worshipped by Shiva's devotees. The worshipper realises his relationship to the benign aspect of the great God. Thus the word *pasu* denotes "a follower of Shiva or a soul". Zimmer (1965) further mentions that *pasu* is a term signifying the uninitiated person, the general and the lowermost grade of Shiva's devotees. In a spiritual sense such an illuminated one is as dumb as a brute and must be goaded by God. *Pasu* then represents the grade opposed to that of the higher one in spiritual evolution.



Shiva as Pashupati

Macdonell (1963) mentions that even in the *Vedas* Shiva as *Pashupati*, a title of *Rudra* is regarded as the agent for promoting fertility in the cattle.

SHIVA-RUDRA :

Lord Shiva is honoured and worshipped as Shiva-Rudra, the frightening Rudra. In the early Vedic times, Rudra was a personification in the vague and uncertain anthropomorphic form of the destructive nature of the storms, of the lightning and of the forest fires. Vedic Rudra is a terrible god who is to be constantly pacified. In the *Rigveda*, Rudra is invoked so that he might become merciful and bengin. Many Vedic hymns are addressed to Rudra so that he may become a benevolent deity. In the Sata-rudra, the deity is invoked by one hundred names. In the *Vajasayeni Samhita*, the *Atharveda* and *Attreya* and *Sankhyayana Brahmanas*, the name Shiva becomes distinctive. For all Shivas, the deity Shiva-Rudra is the great god called Mahadeva, Maheshwara, Pashupati, Girisha, etc.

SHIVA-SHAKTI :

The most important female principle is the female god who is represented as the consort of Shiva. Dual personality is known as Shiva-Shakti. The concept of the male and the female has been given so much importance that sometimes Shiva-Shakti constitutes a balanced fusion of half-Shiva and half-Shakti or Shiva-*Ardhanari*. The two complementary principles get united to constitute an identity or a single organism. It is, as it were, a self contradictory representation of the instrinsically two-fold nature of the one fold universe and its inhabitant-man. Shiva-Shaki is multifarious, having mothered the universe and the individual (macro-and microcosm) as the correlative revelation of the divine. The eternal feminine is a pre-eminent riddle. It is known in Hinduism that there is no creation or evolution without the female energy. Shakti is depicted in various aspects, and she symbolizes various forms. It is regarded that Shiva is known by 1008 names so is his consort known by several names in her many manifestations which possess counter-parts of each of these names besides many more of her own. The dual characteristics of the Hindu gods, the contemplative and the active, the reigning and the conquering, the meditating and the mutant are nowhere so prominent as in Shiva and his consorts. Shiva-Shakti is imbued with secret knowledge that though seemingly two they are fundamentally one. The union of Shiva-Shakti derives all polarities and antagonisms which characterise life. The God dwells in *Lingam*, the phallus, and the goddess in *Yoni*, the mother womb of the ever-cycling eons of all universe endlessly extending in space and of every atom in the living cell.

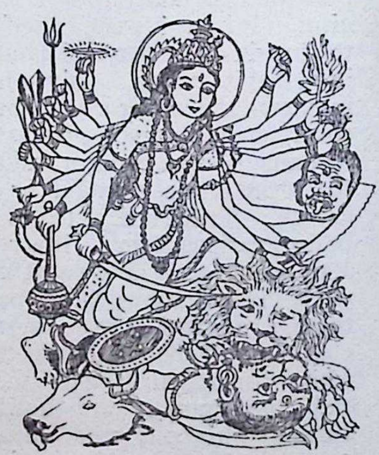
Shakti is specifically referred to through it. She is recognised with the one as it is believed that she combines in her person both the universal male and the universal female. The female is the complete one and so she is the central object of worship.

SHAKTI OR DEVI (The Supreme Goddess). In Hinduism, feminine counterparts have been recognised and represented. The '*Shakti*' or wife of a god is sometimes named after the deity himself, for instance Agnayi after Agni, Brahmani after Brahma, Indrani after Indra, Rudrani after Rudra, Vaishnavi after Vishnu, Gauri after Shiva and so on.

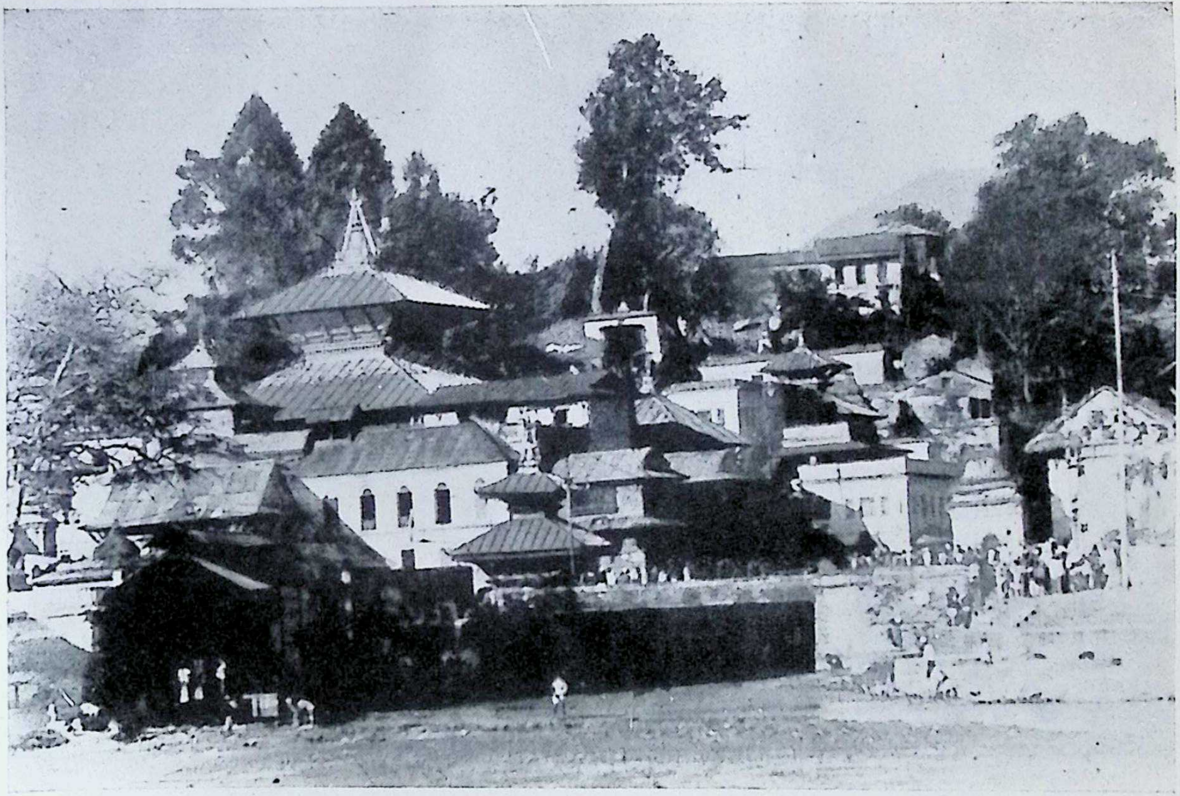
Shakti is called the Mother Goddess or the Great Mother or *Magna Mater*, *Jagatmatri*. *Jagdamba*, *World-Mother* etc.

Shakti is the wife or the conjugal partner of Shiva, especially, as Sati and Parvati. Much Tantric symbolism is centered around Shakti. Shiva-Shakti is the union of Energy and Being. Devotees of Shakti-cult also adopt meditation.

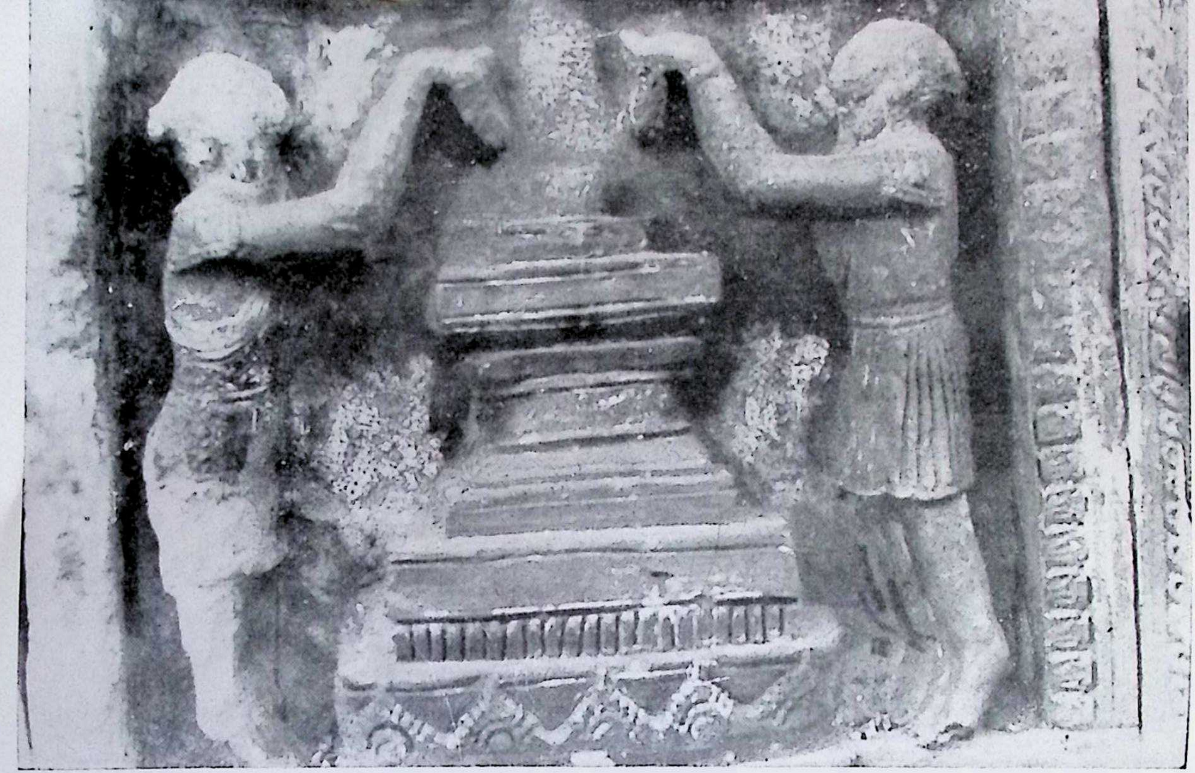
According to the *Vayu Purana*, Shakti or female nature is two-fold. One half as *asit* or black and the other half as *sit* or white. The white one is of milder nature such as Sati, Parvati, Uma, Gauri, etc. The dark or the fierce nature is represented by Durga, Kali, Chandi, Chamunda, etc. Shakti or the energy of Shiva had many manifestations and personifications. These forces or defied personalities are grouped by several scholars into three classes. *Mahavidyas* (sources of great knowledge), *Matris* (divine mothers), *yoginis* (goddesses having magical powers).



Durga, the fierce form



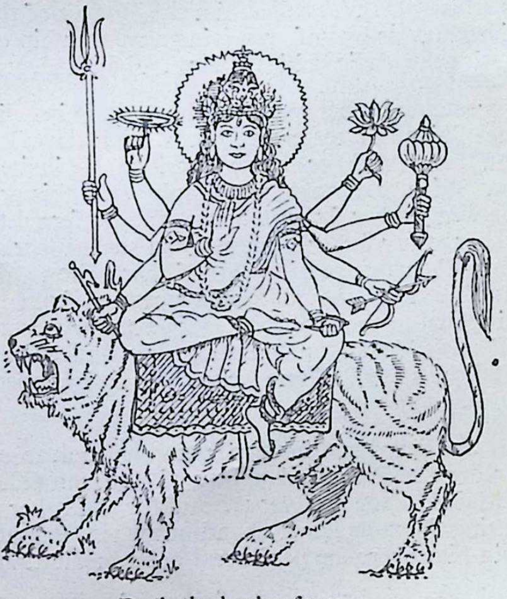
View of Pashupatinath and funeral ghats.



A superb terracota art depicting Shiva-worship.

SHAKTI AS BENIGN POWER :

Shakti as a benign power is represented by Sati or Parvati or Uma. The story of Sati is given in the *Bhagavata Purana*. There is a beautiful legend. Very long ago, there was a king called Daksha, who married Prasuti, daughter of Manu. She bore him sixteen daughters, the youngest of whom was Sati who became Shiva's wife. Her father, Daksha, was not happy with Shiva, because of his shabbiness and careless habits and because he did not pay respect to Daksha in a certain ceremony. However, Sati, when she grew up, developed a liking for Shiva and worshipped him in secret. When Sati reached the marriageable age, Daksha held a *Swayamvara* ceremony where Sati could choose her husband. Daksha invited to that ceremony all the gods except Shiva whom he hated. Sati went around with a garland in her hand looking



Devi, the benign form

for Shiva but when she could not find him in the gathering, she threw the garland up in the air and requested Shiva to receive it. At the same moment, Shiva manifested himself and the garland fell around his neck. There was no choice left to Daksha. Therefore, he was obliged to accept him as his son-in-law. Shiva went with Sati to his home at Kailash in the Himalayas.

In the *Bhagvata Purana*, there is a story about how Daksha gave his daughter to Shiva. Shiva is described in the story as an unclean and proud demolisher of rites, as one that roams about in funerals and burials accompanied by a host of ghosts and spirits, as a lunatic who goes about naked with dishevelled hair, laughing and weaping in an erratic manner smeared with ashes lying in cremation grounds and as one wearing a garland of skulls. He claims to be Shiva but is in reality *ashiva* (inauspicious) being as insane and followed by ghosts as he is. Daksha called him the lowest of the gods as *bhagava* i.e., unworthy of receiving any worship or offering on a par with the Vedic deities, Indra and Vishnu.

The great enmity between Daksha and Shiva did not end there. Once Shiva did not greet Daksha. One day Daksha performed an *ashvamedh* or horse sacrifice. He invited all gods but left out Shiva. Sati could not simply stand this great insult. When she went to her father's house she preferred to be even a gatecrasher at her father's house when such a ceremony was going on. When she went to her fathers' house despite her husband's objections, she got a cold reception from her father. Like adding fuel to the fire Sati got extremely angry. She created *Jwala Mukhi* or inward fire and threw herself dead at Daksha's feet. Some write that Sati jumped into the fire of *Yajna*.

Shiva was dazed and in desperation he took to asceticism. Sati was reborn as Parvati, daughter of Himavan (The Himalayas) and Maina. She was very beautiful and her mind was set on getting Shiva as her husband but when Parvati was unable to win him over, she performed great meditation.

Parvati then tried to win the favour of Shiva by devotion.

She underwent several hardships and penances. One day, when she was standing on one leg with lifted arms as part of the meditations, a Brahman came and asked her why she was torturing and languishing her beautiful body. Parvati said that she was in love with Shiva and wanted to marry him. The Brahman laughed and told her that Shiva looked shabby and had filthy habits. Parvati rebuked the Brahman who changed his guise and appeared before her as Shiva. Shiva went to Himavan and married Parvati, according to customery rites. Parvati is also known as Uma besides by several other names.

Shiva-Parvati symbolises the ideal Hindu couple. A Hindu bride wants to be as Parvati and likes to be loved as Shiva loved Parvati. Therefore, before marriages the Hindu-girls usually worship Parvati or Gauri and pray for getting spouses of their dream.

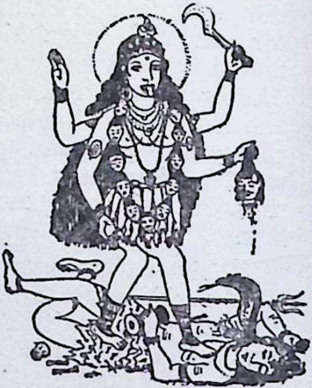
SHAKTI AS POWER OF DESTRUCTION :

Durga is represented as Shakti or feminine energy with a wrathful and destructive aspect. She is a beautiful yellow skinned goddess having ten arms and is portrayed as slaying the buffalo demon. In each of her arms, she carries a weapon presented to her by different gods, the important ones being the trident, conch shell, bow and *chakra* or discus. Durga possesses the power of ten gods and her vehicle is a lion.

KALI, THE ETERNAL FEMALE :

Kali is the most dreadful and prodigious aspect of Shakti. She is represented as dark skinned and half-naked. She wears a necklace of skulls or severed heads. Her tongue juts out and drops of blood trickle down from it. She is generally shown with four hands. In one of her hands, she carries a decapitated head which she chopped off with her large sword. Often two hands are raised in a gesture of blessing for bestowing favour. Kali killed several demons. Once Shiva had to stop her from killing indiscriminately. He got her to dance on his body, and this depicts the mastery over time. Zimmer (1965) is of opinion that this is a tantric representation. Other authors are of opinion that by conquering the god of destruction, she affirms creation.

Kali is represented by her feminine nature, the life-bearing, life-nourishing, maternal principle. Kali is the feminine gender of the word *Kala* meaning the time.



Kali, the dreadful form.

Shankaracharya (c.A.D. 800) said in worship of Kali,...“She who takes up her abode in all perishable things being under the form of energy ‘*Ya devi sarvabhuteshu sakti-rupena samsatha*’. Shankaracharya addressed her. “Who art thou, Oh Fairy one ? Auspicious one. You whose hands hold both : delight and pain ? Both : the shade of death and the elixir of immortality are the grace, Oh Mother !”.

Thus, it is affirmed that the creative and destructive principles are one and the same.

Kali is the embodiment of Shiva’s very essence and reveals herself to be the destroyer. Zimmer (1956) mentions, “She is destruction-incarnate, the destruction-unending, wrought by the generating life-bearing”.

Some authors opine that horrfic, beautiful, caressing-murdering symbolization of the totality of the world, creating-destroying symbolization of totality of the world, creating-destroying-eating-eaten one, seem more than difficult to love. However, her tantric philosophy and art are of a rich unfolding nature. Goddess Kali in the fullness of her extraneous beauty is creative thought of the Hindus. Kali represents a place, balancing the terms of birth and death. The vehicle of Kali is also a lion.

FORMS OF INCARNATIONS OF SHIVA :

There are several forms of incarnations of Shiva. There are eight Bhairavas :—

1. Asitanga
2. Rur,

3. Chanda,
4. Krodha
5. Ummatta,
6. Kapala,
7. Bhisana,
8. Samhara.

Eight forms of Bhairava are further divided into eight subordinate forms thus making sixty four in all in the *Rudra Yamala*.

They are all terrific forms of Shiva and are sometimes called his incarnations.

There is also a form of incarnation of Shiva called *Virbhadra*. It is said that he was created from the mouth of Shiva to take vengeance on Daksha, father-in-law of Shiva as he avoided to invite Shiva and Parvati to a great sacrifice of *Ashvamedha yajna* (horse sacrifice). Virbhadra is depicted as fierce and terrific with a thousand heads, eyes, feet and weapons. In the Unmutta Bhairav idol at Pashupati, Virbhadra is depicted as a part of Bhairav himself and Daksha is shown lying at the feet. The *Veda* describes that there are eleven Rudras which are manifestations of his nature of destruction and later evolved into Shivas. Some scriptures mention 14 names of Rudras as follows :—

1. Aja
2. Ekapada,
3. Ahirbudnya,
4. Virupaksha,
5. Revata,
6. Hara,
7. Bahurupa,
8. Tryambaka,
9. Sureskvara,
10. Jayanta,
11. Aparjita,
12. Mrityunjaya,
13. Kiranaksha,
14. Srikantha.

"It is very irrational to say that the history of gods in Hinduism is a fantasy full of extravagent fables".

6

SHAIVISM, THE CULT OF SHIVA

Shaivism is one of the prominent Hindu cults. It is much more ancient than Vaishnavism. The followers and worshippers of this cult are called *Shaivas* and this school of religious philosophy is called *Shaivism*. The philosophy of the Shiva cult represents Shiva as the earliest and universal impression of Nature upon men—the impression of endless and unrelenting change. Shiva has also assimilated demonolatary and animism of the non-Aryan races. He is Vedic Rudra and has a benevolent as well as a malevolent character. However, Shiva is generally considered as an auspicious one.

Shiva is the mountain god and is associated with the Himalayas. Similarly, Parvati is the mountain goddess. Scholars describe him as a god of Nature, the impersonation of reintegration as well as of destruction, the typical ascetic, the contemplative philosopher and sage, the wild and juvial mountaineer surrounded by his troupe of dancers. Shiva is also regarded as the god of reproduction and the destroyer of death. Even as Pashupati, the Lord of Beasts, as the title given to Rudra goes, is regarded as the agent promoting fertility in cattle. His manifestation of *Ardhanarishwara i.e.*, half male and half female, symbolizes the union of *Purush* and *Prakriti*, the central theme of Nature worship. The popularization of the Shiva cult involved a process of syncretism and the adoption of various deities as his manifestation, (page, 107)

Shaivas worship Shiva and hold this view that Brahma and Vishnu are subordinate to Shiva or are merely a part of Him. The followers of Vishnu are called *Vaishnavas* the adoration of Vishnu in any one of his forms is called *Vaishnavism.*

Shaivism and Vaishnavism constitute the very life and soul of modern Hinduism. These two sects are not incompatible or antagonistic to each other, but represent two parallel lines of religious thoughts. The Shaivas and Vaishnavas acquiesce to a certain extent to other's views ; however, they lay stress on particular doctrines. Shaivas and Vaishnavas can be distinguished by the sectarian mark on their foreheads. Vaishnavas put a red and yellow mark of two perpendicular lines meeting below in a curve. This mark is called *urdhavapundra* and represents the foot-print of Vishnu. Shaivas put three horizontal lines, white or ashes (*vibhuti*) in colour. This mark is called *tripundra.* In Nepal there is not only tolerance and perfect harmony between these two sects and the followers of one sect worship the gods of the other sect with equal reverence. In the temples of Shiva usually several images of Vishnu are also found existing and in the temples of Vishnu there are similarly several *lingas* dotted here and there.

In the *Manusmriti*, the Supreme Spirit is called *Narayana* as moving on waters. Several images of Narayana in the human form reposing on a thousand headed serpent *Sesha* or *Ananta* and floating in waters or riding Garuda are represented. Monier Williams (1971) aptly writes, "Hinduism is like a drama in which the plot is clearly traceable but in which the acts are numerous and in which each succeeding act is more diversified and sensational than that which precedes. In the act which has now opened upon us the scenes are continually shifting."

The better class of worshippers of Shiva are followers of *Advaita* philosophy. They do not consider the moral law absolute. They are of the view that *Jnana* or knowledge is a definite way of getting salvation rather than *bhakti* or devotion.

The most famous *advaitin* (monist), Shankaracharya though he was a *smartha i.e.*, a broad-minded sectarian who believed in all deities and worshipped them alike, had faith in the cosmos of Shaiva and Shakta. Shankaracharya made Shaivism popular. He was also responsible for the popularity of Shaivism in Nepal. He accepted many fetishes of the aborigines as manifestations of Shiva and his followers supported the theory. Shankaracharya encouraged idolatry to a great extent.

In Shaivism, Shiva and his consort are worshipped together. Woshippers of the female principle (*Shakti*) are called *Shaktas*. Some temples are exclusively dedicated to Shiva but images of Parvati, Ganesh, Kumar (Kartikeya) and Nandi (the bull) are also installed in the same temple. Various manifestations of Shiva such as Bhairava, Virbhadra, etc. are also worshipped.

The most popular form of Shiva worship is the *lingam*, the symbol of male organ of regeneration. He is the God of destruction as well as of creation. A stone roller made cylindrically in the shape of a phallus is enshrined in many temples and is worshipped as the symbol of Shiva. In Nepal, according to the *Himvat Khand*, millions of Shivlingas are installed and only the initiated recognize the *lingam* as the symbol of the Great God Shiva it represents.

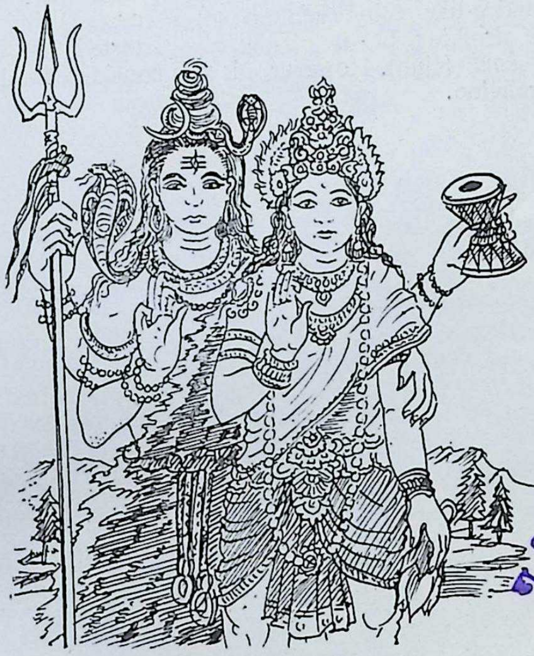
The worship of *lingam* is of non-Aryan origin. According to the *Vedas* some people worshipped God as *shrasta* (creator). Later these people imposed on the Indo-Aryans an esteem for this God.

There are different sub-sects among the Shaivas. Pashupata is also a Shaivite sect which found mentioned in the *Mahabharata* as being associated in its early stages with Shiva in his aspect of the Lord of cattle. This term is also explained in the *Puranas* as the Lord (*pati*) who helps his creatures (*pasu*) to free themselves from the bondage (*pasa*) of this world.

The sect of *Pasupata* is founded by Shiva himself who passed the doctrines secretly to certain *rishis*, (saints) Later it was brought down to the level of ordinary understanding in the form of Lakulisa (A.D. 200). According to a legend Shiva entered the corpse of an unknown person who had been left in a cemetery along with the *Lakula* or club that he used to carry. The deity embodied in the corpse took the staff and taught to his chosen disciple the doctrine of the *Pashupata* cult. The subjects of *Pashupata* flourished in Nepal. From the eleventh century another branch of the *Pashupatas* became popular, they were called *Kalamukha* (black faced) as they were applying black *tika* mark on the forehead. They were the precursors of *Kapalikas*, *Kanphattas*, *Aghoris* and other left-handed sects.

The theological system of the *Pashupata* is dualism-nondualism. They recognize five categories namely (1) *Karma*, the cause which creates, sustains and destroys all things.

(2) *Karya*, the effect which includes knowledge, sense organs and individual souls.



डा. डिल्ली रमण रेग्मी
कल्याणी रेग्मी स्मारक
पुस्तकालय
४९४८

Shiva and Shakti (Parvati)

(3) *Yoga*, the discipline by which one understands God.

(4) *Vidhi*, rules or injunctions which lead to righteousness.

(5) *Dukhanta*, the ways for cessation of misery and the attainment of final deliverance.

Early precepts and observances include simple ascetism, a vow to leave greed and anger and to repeat the syllable *Aum* for practising meditation. The main purpose of the theological system of *Pashupata* was union with the Shiva through meditation, *mantras* and the cessation of all actions. Thus a state of pure feeling was attained. *Pashpatas* precipitate trance-like states. Some *Pashupatas* also became drug addicts, drunkards, left hand occultists. Some of the them took to filthy practice like eating the flesh of a corpse, using human skulls as drinking bowls. They also started worshipping *lakula* or *danda* (club). However, it was considered a distorted form of religion.

"Even non-Hindu scholars grant that Hindu philosophy ranks withs the most refined philosophies in the world."

7

CONCEPT OF LINGA OR PHALLUS

According to the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, in the beginning this world was just a **nondual being** which was *sat* (the true existence). Some people say that in the beginning this world was just a **nondual non-being** *i.e.*, *a-sat*. But it is not correct to say that beings are produced from the non-being. It is also written in the *Chhandogya Upanishad* that in the beginning this world must have been a pure being, only one in existence without a second.

According to the philosophy behind the *Upanishad* to reach the root of any aspect of the manifest world one should imagine beyond its form and appearance the causal state and some undifferentiated continum. The first of the continua underlying all perceptible forms is **space**. Hindu philosophers believe that space is a limitless, undifferentiated, indivisible continuum in which are built the imaginary divisions of **relative space**. All the divisions of space into atoms and heavenly spheres are mere appearances. The space within an atom can be as immense as that within a solar system. There can be no limit to the number of possible words contained in another.

Time is an indivisible continuum. This absolute time is an eve-present eternity which is considered to be inseparable from space. "The relative time results from the apparent division of space by the rhythm of heavenly bodies."

Thought is the third perceptible continuum. Everything which exists appears with a form, within a coordinated system. The visible universe was regarded as the concrete form of thought of its creator. The root of anything lies in a form and concept whose nature can be identified with that of thought.

The cosmos is not an unconscious mechanism but is a creative process within a conscious power. There is active substratum for each perceptible continuum *i.e.*, space, time and thought. The substratum of space is called existence (*sat*), the substratum of time is experience or enjoyment (*ananda*), the substratum of thought is consciousness (*chit*). Time exists only in relation to perception because non-perceived time can have no extension and cannot be a measure of anything. Therefore, the principle of perception must precede time. The first undifferentiated potential perception presupposes that the first principle of experience corresponds to pure, absolute enjoyment, the inner-most nature of existence.

According to the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, the primordial principle (*Brahman*) is enjoyment and from enjoyment all beings are born. Once born, they are sustained by enjoyment and leave this world to return to enjoyment. **Karapatri** (1941-42) mentions in the *Lingopasana Rahasya*, "There is no experience, no enjoyment without being and no being without experience (enjoyment). When we speak of enjoyment (*ananda*) as self-illuminated existence (*svaprakasa satta*) we mention that enjoyment is shown as something other than sensation that existence is the form of enjoyment and that existence is freed from the notion of inertia."

Enjoyment being the form of experience, the enjoyment continuum and the basis of experience is also known as feeling or *rasa* or emotion. The *Taittiriya Upanishad* says, "He, the total being verily is but feeling." The *Taittiriya Upanishad* further adds, 'He who knows the enjoyment of the immensity does not know fear from any quarter. He is not tormented by the thought "Why did not I act rightly ? Why did I sin ? He, who knows that right and wrong are relative things, reaches the **soul**."

The substratum of the thought is consciousness and as the substrutum of consciousness the *Atman* is *Self*, the innermost nature of all divinities, of all the forms of the manifest universe, of all living beings. According to the *Manusmriti*, "The soul is the sum of all gods and all gods are thus one **soul** and all dwell in a **soul**. The ruler of heaven or Indra and all gods are the supreme soul and it is supreme as it includes all.

The space-time-thought continuum can be called immensity or *Brahman*. The *Taittiriya Upanishad* says, 'The Brahman is indivisible existence knowledge and eternity'. In cosmology there are three qualities which are envisaged as the centripetal attraction (*adana*), the centrifugal-force (*utkranti*), and their equilibrium (*pratistha*). From these three qualities orginate the revolving impulse and movement of all sphere. The centripetal attraction is known as *existence* (*sattva*) and it creates cohesion. The power of cohesion is the tendency which binds the world together and is the preserving tendency. It is personified in *Vishnu*, the All-Pervader, the Preserver of the Universe. This Hindu God of the Trinity is the embodiment of *Sattva*.

The centrifugal force is known as darkness or inertia (*tamas*). It is the power which aims at preventing concentration. *Tamas* is the centrifugal tendency toward dispersion, dissolution or annihilation into non-being. It represents a breakaway from all which binds. This tendency of destruction is personified in Shiva, the destroyer of the worlds or lord of tears (*Rudra*). Shiva, the Hindu god of trinity embodies the abysmal obscurity into which all activity in the end dissolves. The *Linga Purana* says that Shiva or Maheshwara is the innermost nature of all things. Karapatri (1941-42) describes in the *Lingopasana rahasya*, "Ultimately everything arises from disintegration (*tamas*) and ends in disintegration. Because he rules over disintegration and controls it, the lord of sleep (Shiva) is the principal of the universe."

The balance of *sattva* and *tamas* *i.e.*, centripetal and centrifugal, of cohesion and dispersion, of light and darkness gives birth to the third tendency, the revolving tendency called activity or multiplicity or *rajas*. It is regarded as the source of an endless variety of the forms of the manifest universe. From *rajas* or revolving tendency arise all rhythmic divisions of the continua of space and time. This tendency is the process through which creation in its endless variety of form takes place in divine mind. This tendency of creation is personified in the Immense Being, *Brahma*, the creator.

These qualities or *gunas*, although fundamentally distinct, are inseparable and cannot exist independently of each other. The personification of three qualities is in the three gods : Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva which are known as *Trimurti* or trinity.

Shiva is the progenitor, the Father or Lord of Sleep. He is the embodiment of experience, of enjoyment. His symbol is phallus or *linga*, the fountain of life, the source of pleasure. Thus, enjoyment which is life and time, which is death are shown in two aspects of one entity. The source of life and immortality (*amrita*) is the same as that of death (*mrita*), a symbol which expresses itself in all traditions as oneness of love and death (*amar* and *mortis*). "Enjoyment is the form of experience, enjoyment, continuum or a basis of experience. It is also known as feeling or *rasa* or emotion."

Shiva is regarded as the Supreme formless being and is called the giver of the joy (*Shankara*). Shiva is called *Shambhu i.e.*, the abode of joy. Transcendent joy is regarded as the symbol of transcendent experience *i.e.*, absolute knowledge. The symbol or sign of Shankara or Shiva is *Linga*. The *Shiva Purana* says, "The distinctive sign through which it is possible to recognise the nature of someone is called *linga*." Shiva can be perceived only through his creation which is symbolized in his *linga*. The *linga* or phallus, the giver of life, is one of the forms in which Shiva can be represented. According to the *Shiva Purana*, "It is not the *Linga* as such which is worshipped but the owner of the *linga*, the Progenitor, the Supreme man (*Purusha*) it stands for that is worshipped with faith and reverence. The *linga* leads to the Supreme man, to Shiva whose symbol it is."

As the *Linga Purana* has it, "basic Nature (*pradhana*) is called *linga* and the owner of *linga* is the supreme divinity." Karapatri (1941-42) describes in *Sri Shiva tattva* that Shiva as the undivided causal principle is worshipped in the form of *linga*. Embracing the *linga* or phallus is *yoni* or the female organ. *Yoni* represents the manifest nature, the universal energy. Danielou (1963) writes that only under the shape of a *linga* can Shiva, the giver of seeds, be enveloped within the *yoni* and be manifested.

Karapatri (1941-42) writes explicitly, "The symbol of the Supreme Being (*Purusha*), the formless, the changeless, the all seeing eye, is the symbol of masculinity, the phallus or *linga*. The symbol of the power that is Nature, the source of all that exists is the female organ or the yoni."

The *Taittirya Samhita* says "The *linga* stands in the *yoni* which is the power of manifestation, the womb of real and unreal." According to the *Svetasvetra Upanishad*, it is the universal womb in which all that is individual ripens.

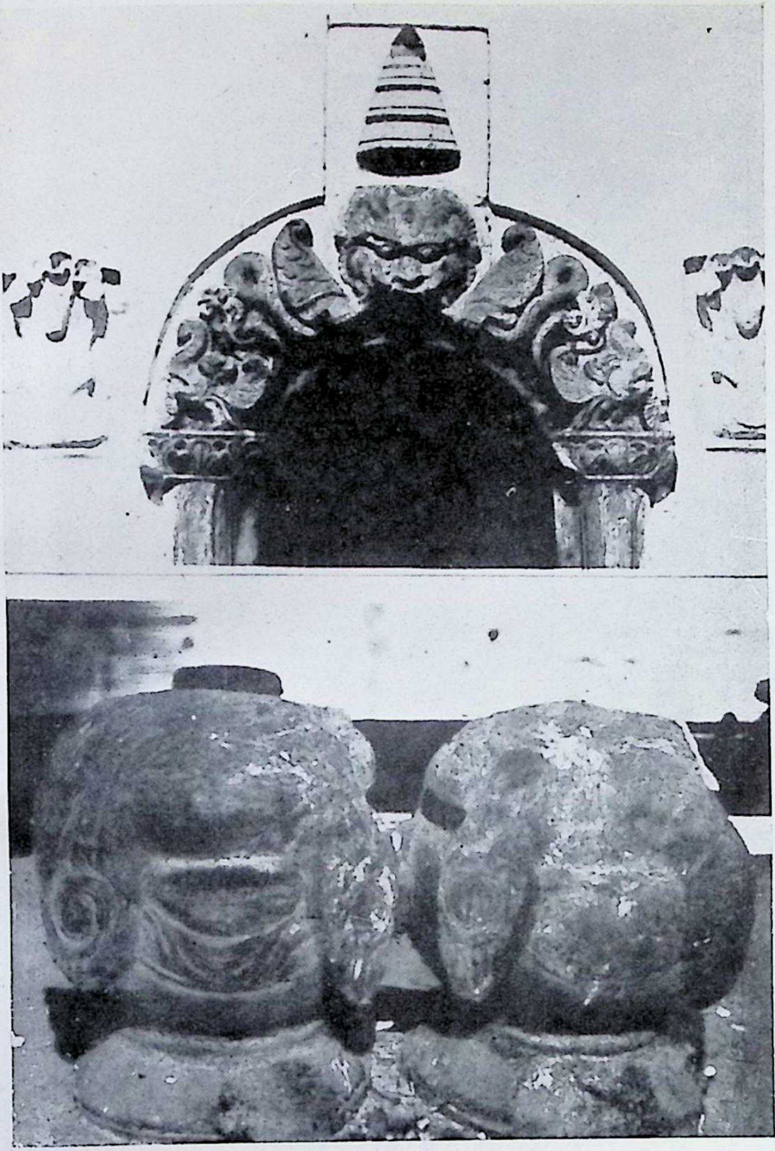
According to the *Bhagvad Gita*, "The vast immensity or the principle of intellect is the womb in which I (Krishna) deposit my seed. From the seed are first born intellect and then subsequently all other elements and all the creatures." As the *Shiva Purana* says, "...because She is the source of development, Nature or *Prakriti* is compared to a womb. The womb is Nature, the basis of all. The enjoyer is Shiva. He is the giver of enjoyment. There is no other giver." *Linga* is regarded as the universal fecundator and as such is fundamentally one. For each form of existence, there is a different womb to be fecundated. Thus the different species are regarded *yonis*. In the *Rigveda* also, although phallic worship is not included in the Vedic rituals, reference is made to the phallus-god (**Shishnadeva**). This reference is found twice in the *Rigveda*.

When manifestation takes place in the undifferentiated substratum, duality is already present. This duality has the character of complementary poles of attraction *i.e.*, a positive and a negative tendency. This will be manifested in the creation by male and female characteristics. There cannot be creation without the relation of opposites. Creation is not possible from Shiva alone or from Nature or *Prakriti* alone. For the creation, the union of a perceiver and a perceived, of an enjoyer and an enjoyed, of a passive and an active principle, of a male and a female organ is essential. The union of the Supreme Person and Nature is represented in the copulation or *maithuna* of Lord of Sleep and Joy (*Shiva*) and Faithfulness (*Sati*) or Energy (*Shakti*).

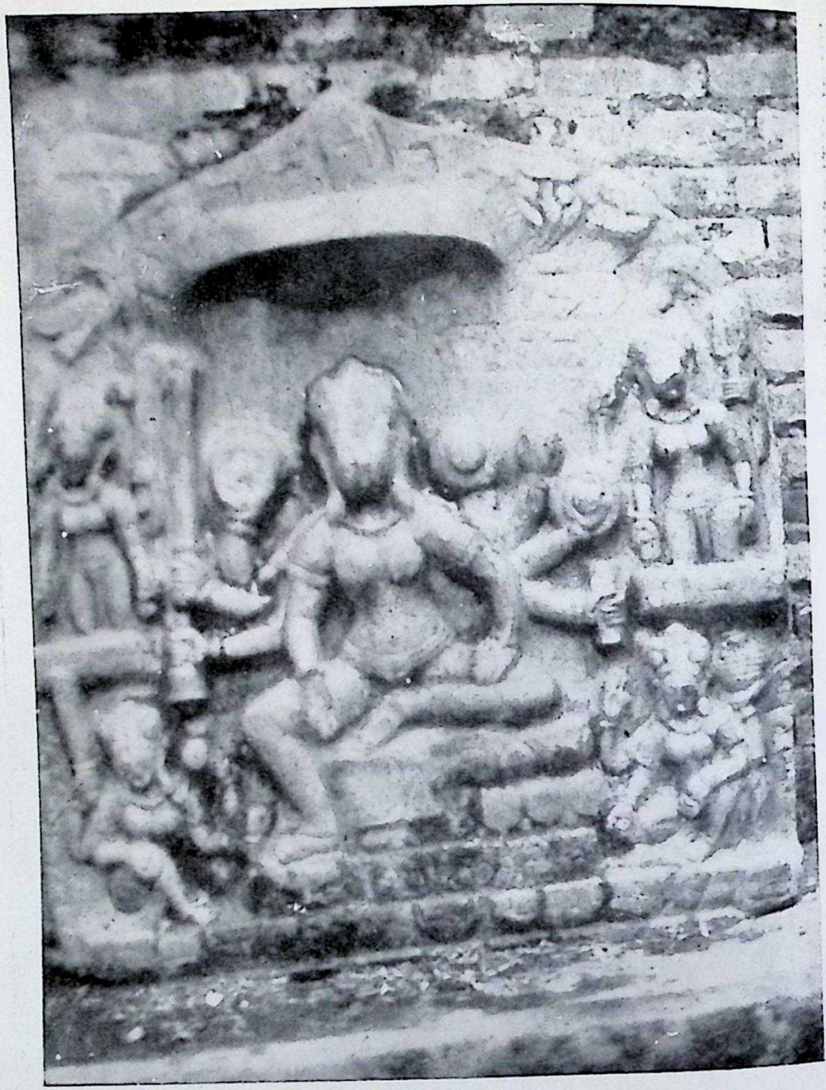
The innermost cause of creation is the transcendent manhood while the efficient cause is the transcendent womanhood. These principles are observed in the microcosm. Everything in nature centres around procreation and is intended to ensure the continuity of life. In the union of *linga* (male organ) and *yoni* (female organ) the power to create is most directly conspicuously visible. There cannot be any creation without sexual union and there cannot be divine manifestation without their cosmic equivalent. The mystery of creation can be understood only by an understanding of *linga* and *yoni*.

The *Taittiriya Upanishad* mentions that in causal being, the desire to create arose, "As he desired, he said let me create, May I be many." Karapatri (1941-42) writes in the *Lingopasana Rahasya*, "Born of the first dualism of the distinction of Person and Nature, desire, the attraction of opposites is the supernatural eros. Linked to Nature by desire, the Cosmic Person gives birth to innumerable worlds. This desire, this inclination toward pleasure is a part of Himself." The *Bhagvat Purana* says, "Desire is a part of the Indweller (Vasudeva)."

A very beautiful interpretation about the significance of the depiction of these sex organs is given by a great Hindu Saint Scholar, Karapatri (Swami Hariharananda Saraswati (1941-42) in his book, '*Lingopasana Rahasya*'. He says, "Pleasure dwells in the sex organ (*Upastha*), in the cosmic *linga* and *yoni* whose union is the essence of enjoyment. In the world also all love, all lust, all desire is a search for enjoyment. Things are desired for the pleasure they contain. Divinity is the object of love because it is pure enjoyment.



Upper - A Tympanum.
Lower - Two Kalasha (holy pots) representing linga and yoni.



Beautiful sculpture of Mangal Gauri on bank of the Bagmati.

Other things are objects of temporary love, since they give us only temporary satisfaction." The scholar further says, "The desire of a lustful man for a woman exists because he sees her as the form of his pleasure, the source of his enjoyment. In the joy of possession, the pain of desire is for one instant relieved and man experiences pleasure, which is the end of his desire, and the perception of his inherent nature which is enjoyment."

Karapatri also aptly says, "All enjoyment, all pleasure is the experience of divinity. The whole universe springs forth from enjoyment ; pleasure is found at the root of everything. Perfect love itself is the transcendent joy of being."

As Danielou (1904) observes Shiva principle is the totality of the procreative power found in the whole universe. According to Karapatri (1941-42) again, "From the relation of *Linga* and *Yoni* the whole world arises. Everything, therefore, bears the signature of the *linga* and the *yoni*. It is the divinity which under the form of all individual *lingas* enter every womb and procreates all beings." According to the *Svetasvatra Upanishad*, "It is He alone who dwells in every womb." Similarly, we can quote from the *Narada Pancharatra*, "The seed of both (Shiva and Sati) fell on back of the earth and filled the world. From this seed all the *Shivalingas* seen in the underworld, on earth and in heaven became manifest. From these are made all the *Shivalingas* of the past and those of the future. The *linga* of Shiva appears from the radiance of both."

As the source of mainfestation, Shiva and Shakti are represented by the organs of procreation. The total is being considered as the entity of which procreation is the characteristic and the *linga* is the symbol for father. According to the *Bhagvat Gita*, "O son of Kunti ! the beings born in all wombs rise from the womb of the Immensity. I am the father, the giver of the seed." It is further mentioned in the same religious text, "I am the father of the world." Karapatri (1941-42) believes that like mother and father principal, Nature and Supreme Person give birth to all forms. He upholds the view that, "In the world, men desirous of progeny, fecundate woman and likewise the supreme being, desirous of progeny, of multiplicity, fecundates Nature."

There is a great symbolic significance of the *linga* or phallus. It is only through the mastery of sex that one becomes powerful in the physical as well as the mental sphere. Through the union of sexes, new beings and new lives come into existence. Thus, the union is the link between two worlds, the point where life manifests itself, where the divine spirit becomes incarnate. The *linga* is the symbol, the visible form of the divine creator. In worshipping the *linga*, the physical feature is not worshipped but the divine, eternal form manifested in the microcosm is recognized. The human phallus is regarded as a divine emblem of the eternal causal form, the all-pervading *linga*.

Karapatri clearly and aptly writes, "Those who do not recognise the divine nature of the phallus, or who do not measure the importance of sex ritual, or who consider the act of love as low or contemptible or as a mere physical function are bound to fail in their attempts at physical as well as spiritual achievement. To ignore the sacredness of the *linga* is dangerous ; whereas through its worship the joy of life (*bhakti*) and the joy of liberation (*mukti*) are obtained."

According to the *Shiva Purana*, "He who spends his life without honouring the phallus is verily unfortunate, sinful and ill-fated. If we put in balance the worship of the *linga* against charities, fasts, pilgrimages, sacrifices and virtues it is the worship of the giver of pleasure and liberation, the remover of adversity that prevails." According to the same religious texts, "He who worships the *linga* knowing it to be the First cause, the source of consciousness, the substance of the universe, is nearer to me (*Shiva*) than any other being." The *Puranas* also state that *Shiva-linga* is an eternel symbol and it is worshipped from earliest ages of mankind. In the *Mahabharata* also the worship of the *linga* is justified and recommended.

Sarkar (1974) writes, 'The problem of creation engaged the attention of the early mankind. In the *Vedas*, we see that when sages attempted to account for the origin of the world, they traced the development of the void (formless) to *tapas* and placed first the birth of *Kama*, the primal germ of the mind which was the bond that connected the entity with non-entity. Out of the union of these two the self supporting principle lying stretched beneath and energy above sprang the gods and whole creation." He further mentions "Gradually the idea of procreation not only affected the Aryan thought but tended to degenerate into obscenity in some of their religious rites. The sacrificial cult was suffused with sex symbolism, which ultimately took the material shape of the *linga*."

Different types of Lingas

Lingas are described to be of different types and their interpretations also vary.

Linga of Universe. The *Skanda Purana* states, "Space is *linga* and the earth, the altar. In it dwell all the gods. It is called 'sign' of all dissolved in it." The earth is also described as the womb and space is the *linga*, erect above its pedestal. Shapeless as it is, it is represented through symbols such as ether or the pillar of light and the universe as egg. These refer to Shiva's manifestation and to all being united with his power.

Cosmic egg. Sometimes totatality is also represented in the form of an egg. The universe is considered as an egg divided into the sky and the earth. The egg is also considered to be the source of light in which both male and female forms are united. This shape is also called sign or *linga*. In the *Tantras*, the phallus is the more common symbol but in the *Puranas*, *linga* is described to be something having an eggshape. It is also mentioned that the principle (*Brahman*) form a curve which surrounds the universe and forms the cosmic egg.

Formless mass. Another symbol of the first causal stage is a shapless object. It is also called *linga* or sign. Several images of Shiva are shapeless representations.

Altar's fire. In the sacrificial ritual, the fire image of the destroyer is known as *linga*, an auspicious light or *Shiva Jyoti*. The altar represents a woman and the hearth or *Yajna*. *Kunda* is the *yoni* (female organ).

Arrow. The arrow or *bana* is also considered as a symbol of number five because of the five arrows of *Kama*, the god of love, by which five senses are affected. The arrow is symbolically related to the human perception and to the five spheres of the senses or elements. The arrow *linga* is shown represented with five faces.

Linga of light. The Shiva principle is regarded as the axis of manifestation developing from the point limit or *bindu*, the centre of the universe. This axis is regarded as an endless pillar of light. When knowledge is attained, the *linga* or light is visible everywhere piercing the world.

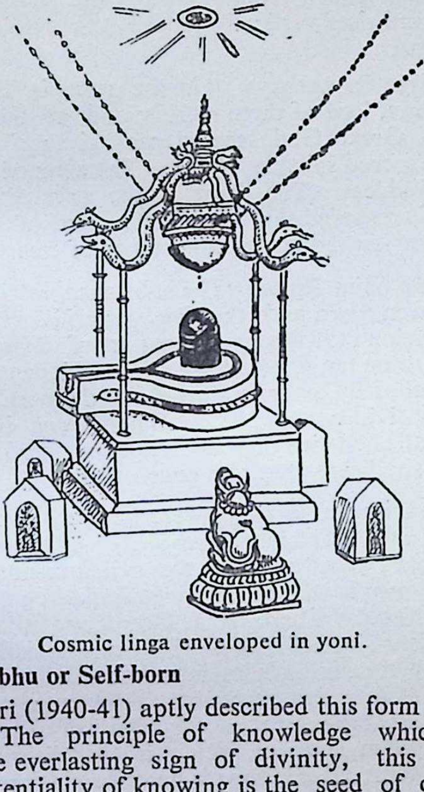
In the exercise of yoga, the base of the spinal cord is known as the hearth or *yoni*. Its shape is similar to that of a female organ. The fiery energy coiled in its centre can be made to rise upward for realization. The uncoiled energy is known as *linga* or light.

According to the *Shiva Purana*, "In the middle of the lowest subtle centre of the body said to be the triangle of desire-knowledge-action, stands this self-born linga shining like thousand suns. All other centres of the body are regarded as *yonis* and have in their middle a *linga* representing the all-prevading power of knowledge."

Mahalinga or Supreme Sign

Kaviraja, Gopinath (1973) very aptly described *Mahlinga* as supreme sign. According to him, "Person and Nature, *Purusha* and *Prakriti* are one, yet distinct, and though distinct, are one. They exist only in relation to each other. From the point of view of the world they pre-exist before creation. It is their undivided stage, the stage when the sign (*linga*) is one with signless (*alinga*) which is called the supreme sign, *Maha-*

linga. This state is the changless (*nirvikara*) stage of divinity conceived as independent of anything else (*niralamba*).



Cosmic linga enveloped in yoni.

Swayambhu or Self-born

Karapatri (1940-41) aptly described this form of *linga* in this way. "The principle of knowledge which pervades Nature is the everlasting sign of divinity, this motionless, signless, potentiality of knowing is the seed of creation, the supreme sign. Out of unmanifest Nature first arises of itself the possibility of being known. This is the self-born sign, the *swayambhu linga*. From the possibility of knowing we can comprehend the existence of Nature yet unmanifest."

The image of Phallus or Linga.

Shiva-linga is always represented in an erect form. It is divisible into three parts. The lowest part is square and is concealed in the pedestal. It is known as Brahma part. The second part is octagonal and is stuck in *Yoni* (female sex symbol). It is called the Vishnu part. The third part is cylindrical and rises vertically above the *Yoni* and is called the Rudra part.

The *Linga Purana* says, "At the root is Brahma; in the middle Vishnu, lord of three worlds; and at the top is fierce Rudra, the Great God, the eternal giver of peace, whose name is the sacred syllable *AUM*. The altar of the *linga* is the Great Goddess. The *linga* is the true divinity (*Maheswara*)." It is regarded that the Vishnu part of *linga* encompassed by the *yoni* points out the source of creation.

To quote *Shiva Purana* "The substance of the pedestal is the universal mother, and the *linga* itself is pure consciousness." Danielou (1964) says, "The part of *linga* outside the *yoni* is said to be ten fingers long. The hidden part of *linga* is divinity veiled by ignorance (*avidya*), the part exposed beyond *yoni* is divinity unveiled." When *yoni* is represented alone it is called chalice or water vessel or *argha* or *Jalahari*. Its shape is similar to that of a conch shell.

In Nepal, images of *lingas* were put up in stones or other materials. Since the Lichhavi dynasty A.D. 400-750 these *lingas* have been venerated by the religious-minded people. The famous *linga* is that of Lord Pashupati Nath, the presiding deity of Nepal. There is a face along with a head on each of the four sides of *linga*. The centre is anomic and signifies that the divine being is undefinable. The linga can be pointed out as a sign or symbol. However, the majority of religious texts consider it as the sign of masculinity and unequivocally a male organ, which is the distinctive feature of man. In some places, *linga* is described as the symbol of a mountain as Lord Shiva is the god of the mountain. *Linga* is considered as the symbol of plenitude and the realisation of divinity.

According to Tucci (1969), "It is also symbolic of the universe in its perpetual cycle of creation and dissolution and infinite space-time complex in which this cycle is accomplished."

According to *Kaulajnanirnaya*, *linga* is identified with the lotus flower which is imagined as being on the top of Shiva's head. From this immaculate lotus all things flow and to which all things return. This identification of *linga* with a lotus is by the assimilation of macrocosm and microcosm.

Tucci (1969) further says, "Linga is also the principle of immortality, the sound which does not vibrate (*Sabdabrahman*), the potential sound which is the basis of all sounds and consequently of all created things for all creation is preceded by an idea which is at the same time a sound."

The *Puranas* describe that the *linga* is an element of fundamental importance and it is honoured by both the gods and the men. Parvati also worshipped *linga*. In the *Ramayana*, it is described that Lord Ram, before going to ancient Lanka is said to have worshipped the *Linga* or Lord Shiva. It was done by way of saying prayers for the fulfilment of ones' aim which was to gain victory

For proper worship, the *linga* should be washed and sanctified with *panchamrita* or a medley of five : cow's milk, curd, ghee (clarified butter), honey and molassess (sugar). In the process of worshipping the symbol of *linga*, the worshipper can meditate on what it stands for.

Sometimes, Shiva is also depicted in the form of *urdhva linga* i.e., erect penis. This posture symbolises the power of regeneration. Tucci (1969) opines that erect penis symbolises perpetual though not consummated, mastery of his senses. This makes Lord Shiva the supreme ascetic. Thus a school of the *lingayats* also developed. The followers of this school, worship, *linga*, believing it is the *linga* of Lord Shiva.

According to the *Skanda Purana*, *Linga* is the name given for that space in which the whole universe is in the process of formation and dissolution. *Shiva-linga*, the all pervading space is thus regarded as a symbol of the cosmic form serenely detached and self sufficient. *Shakti* is the creative impulse in the cosmic process. The *Gauri patta* represents the *adya-shakti*, the energy quanta ; *mahamaya*, the power of manifestation ; *yoni* the primal root or the source of objects. Therefore, *Shiva-linga* with *Gauri-patta* is regarded as the embodiment of both in action and in inaction. In the facile hands of the artist, this manifestation got represented in the form of *linga-yoni*.

Swami Hariharanad Saraswati (Karapatri) (1942) writes, "If Prakriti from whom innumerable universes issue is the total *yoni* so also the supreme spirit who rules over these innumerable universes is the total *linga* and the eggs of the innumerable universes which spring forth from them are the creation."

Karapatri (1942) further writes "There is no propeı Shakti without a support and there is no support without a power ; both exists only in relation to each other. In this way, Shiva is identified with his own power of Shakti and this power (Shakti) is himself Shiva. From this point of view it can be said that *yoni* is a *linga* and *linga* is a *yoni*."

Lal (1965) very eloquently writes, "There can be no doubt that this (*lingam*) was originally a phallic symbol typifying the generative force for it represents the male organ, and is sometimes combined with an annular representation or *yoni* or female organ. There is nothing priapic. The *lingam* is merely a traditional form representing the deity, the original meaning of which few of the worshippers have any conception about. It dates back to that of an early form of religion in which man defied the forces of nature, of which the mystery of generation is one of the most obvious." Scholars consider that linga is simply a hallowed symbol of the god Shiva.

"The idea of procreation not only affected Hindu thought but tended to degenerate into so called obscenity by some people"

"In the Epics and the *Puranas* Shiva was venerated in *Linga* form. It was more popular than his anthropomorphic form"

8

CONCEPT OF YONI

(THE FEMALE ORGAN)

The counterpart of *linga* (phallus of Lord Shiva) is *yoni* or the female organ. Manifestation of Shiva is represented in every Shaivite temple by the *linga* inserted in the *yoni*. Thus *linga* and *yoni* are two components of the cosmic energy, which are complementary to each other. The shape of *yoni* conceptualised in various forms of art is like that of a female organ. *Yoni* is the abode of *Shakti* or energy, and is the receptacle of *linga* ; it receives the *linga* for manifestation, which is only possible when the *linga* of Shiva, the giver of seed, is ensconced in *yoni*.

In Nepal even the, standing images of Narayan (Vishnu) are inserted in the yoni. The beautiful standing image of Narain in Pashupati Temple stands on a *yoni*.

Karapatri (1941-42) says that the symbol of the supreme being or *purush* is phallus (*linga*) which is the symbol of masculinity while the symbol of power i.e., Nature (*prakriti*), the source of all that exists, is the female organ (*yoni*). The symbol is *linga* joined with *yoni* is considered to be the manifestation of the greatest creative force.

According to the *Svetasvatra Upanishad*, *Yoni* represents, "The universal womb in which all that is individual ripens." *Linga* or phallus fecundates the womb. In the *Shiva Purana*, Nature or *Prakriti* is compared to a womb, because she is regarded as the source of development. Copulation or *maithuna* represents the union of the Supreme being (Shiva) and Nature

(Shakti). *Yoni* and *linga* are both creative elements of the cosmos and therefore, there is pleasure in their union which is the basis of all creations. Lust or sex-desire has 'ts origin in pleasure and therefore, it is divine. Pleasure or happiness derived from creation is transcendental whereas pleasure derived from destruction is sadistic or hellish.

Since the earliest prehistoric period of Shaivism, the eternal couple Shiva-Shakti has been represented in the form of *linga* and *yoni*, symbolically male and female organs. This concept prevailed in a diffused way during the whole of the later period of Hinduism. *Yoni* with *linga* embedded in it became the main object of worship and came to be regarded in the spiritual world as the highest form of divinity.

Energy which is the source of all actions is represented in the female emblem or *yoni*. It is the origin of all phenomena in the world and it is responsible for a conscious plan of creation. *Shakti* or goddess is represented as consciousness or as knowledge. Without goddessess gods are non-existent or inert. Just as knowledge (*Jyana*) without action (*kriya*) is dead, feeling (*rasa*) without strength (*bala*) is dead.

In the *Devi Upanishad*, the goddess says, "I am the form of Immensity, from me the universe arises as Nature and Person (*Prakriri-Pursha*)." It is written in the *Linga Archana Tantra*, "Devoid of senses, the eternal lord of sleep is found merely in the form of a void. What can be expected from the worship of nothingness ? Without the great daughter-of-the Mountain (Parvati) being always glorified as his supreme dead energy, the corpse of Rudra is never worshipped. This primordial goddess is known as the coiled '*Kundalini*". Her substance is Brahma-Vishnu-Shiva all in one. She envelops Shiva with he three and a half veils". Symbolising Shiva's union with energy, *linga* securely placed in *yoni* is worshipped.

The quiscent aspect of Shiva is inert, while activity is the characteristic of *Nature* (*Prakriti*). Therefore, the female form is represented in the sexual union as being above (*viparita*) the male.

The *Shaktas*, who are the worshippers of the supreme Goddess, the source of existence, considered female as the main representation of divinity. The powerful energy cannot be distinct from the substratum from which it arises.

In the *Vedas* also *Shakti* means energy where its equivalent *sachi* (divine grace) represents energy. In the *Svetasvatra Upanishad* also, the supreme power is understood by the notion of *Shakti*.

In the Hindu theology, *Shakti* is another name for power which is manifested in the form of the creative principle. It takes the place of Brahma. In later mythology, the concept of *Shakti* encompassed both the notions of concentrating and illuminating power i.e., Vishnu and an active space-time principle that is Brahma to form a complement to the male positive ultimate knowledge i.e., Shiva.

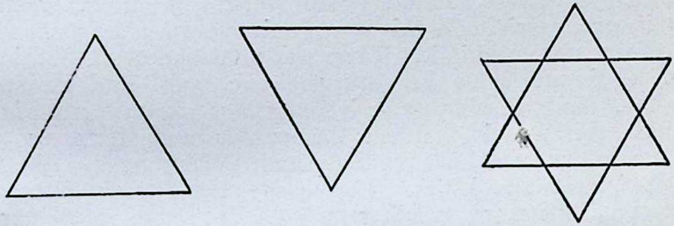
Danielou (1964) postulates very beautifully, "Nothing can exist unless there is some ground for its existence, some substratum from which it may rise. There must also be some possibility and some reason for existence." He further writes, "The tension between the opposites from which motion arises in the substratum is depicted as the first appearance of energy (*Shakti*). It is from the manifest energy and not merely from the opposition which it springs forth, that existence arises. Energy does not pertain to one or the other of the opposites nor to their mere opposition. It is something more, something new. Once manifestation has taken place, it appears as the substance of everything, pervading everything. It can be represented as power of Shiva or that of Vishnu or that of Brahma. From the point of view of cosmology, this power when manifest is called Nature (*Prakriti*)."

In Nepal, one of the tutelary goddessess is **Guheshwari**, the goddess of the female organ. This is one of the most sacred temples and is consecrated to Goddess Shakti. According to a myth, Daksha, father of Sati performed a fire sacrifice in which he invited all the gods and kings but did not invite Shiva, his son-in-law. Sati. however, decided to be a gatecrasher and went uninvited to her father's house at the time of the sacrifice. Being unable to bear the insult made to Shiva, she killed herself by jumping into the holy fire. When Shiva learnt about the death of his dear wife he got the sacrificial ceremony destroyed with the help of a demon. Carrying the dead body of Sati on his shoulders, sad and irate, Shiva went about roaming all over the world. Other gods got the body of Sati decomposed which soon got disintegrated and fell apart. Pieces fell down in several places which in turn become sanctified. On the spot where the temple of **Guheswari** is constructed the female organ *yoni* or *bhaga* of Sati is believed to have fallen down. Thus the female part of Sati the consort of Shiva is worshipped. The worshipping of the female organ has led to the depiction of female organs on various temples. This is presumably on the basis of the fact that the vagina or the secret part of the body is to be worshipped for the great religious value because it symbolises the all powerful goddess, *Shakti*. Thus, on account of their great symoblic significance, *yonis* or female organs are depicted or carved on various temples and sanctuaries of Nepal.

The *yoni* is symbolized by the triangle of Nature made of three fundamental qualities or *gunas* : (a) Ascending illumination (b) descending obscurity and (c) dynamic creativeness. This triangle points downward and represents the force of inertia which pulls downward and tends to suppress activity. It is also associated with the element water, which always goes down to find its own level. It is the passive aspect of creation and thus a representation of *yoni*, the female organ stands for the emblem of energy (*Shakti*) or cosmic nature (*Prakriti*).

The triangle with its apex pointing upwards is identified with the male principle or *linga* (phallus). It is the symbol of the progenitor or of the cosmic person (*Purusha*).

Shiva, in his true form, stands above Nature unsoiled by three qualities. When Shiva assumes the form of Rudra he becomes the destroyer, the dispenser of death or the cause of disintegration, whereas the creative aspect of Shiva is the giver of the seed i.e., *bijavan* to the receptacle or *yoni*. In the stage beyond manifestation, *yoni* is denominated by a circle and the central part is represented as the root of the *linga*. However, in differentiated creation, the three qualities become distinct and the circle is changed to a triangle. In the symbolism of *yantras*, these are essential figurations. The *Tantras* call this the root triangle or *mulatrikona*. Linga represents liberation in all the triangles of nature. Linga is non-syllabic *AUM* in the three *Vedas*.



Yoni represents the fountain of fertility, the symbol of creativity in Nature, the centre of bliss in tranquillity.

Linga combined with yoni is the symbol of female creative energy, and the two together convey the male and female principles.

9

ORIGIN OF JYOTIRLINGA OF PASHUPATINATH

There is a very interesting story about the origin of the unique *Jyotirlinga* of Pashupatinath which is given in greater detail here. Originally this whole universe was a sea and the earth was immersed in it. There was total darkness. At that time a dispute arose between the two gods Brahma and Vishnu.* Brahma said that he is the creator and protector of the world. Vishnu said that he is the creator and destroyer of all the beings ; and he is the Sadanand, Vishwanand, Ishwar and origin of all deities. The debate made each of them become all the more recalictrant and both the gods were arrogantly trying to establish one's superiority over the other. At that time a *linga* in the form of the celestial light appeared between the two. That *linga* was bright and luminous, dazzling and beautiful. Soon that *linga* which was elongated went on growing steadily longer and longer. Seeing the intense bright light both Brahma and Vishnu started to run away. At that time there was an oracle in which the *Jyoti or* the celestial light said that out of the two gods he who would first reach and find out the beginning or the end of this light would be the superior of the two. After hearing the announcement, both of them agreed to go out on the expedition and find the tail and head. Vishnu went to the nether world to find the root of the celestial light while Brahma went to *golok* where he saw *Surabhi* or *Kamdhenu* cow. She asked the purpose of Brahma's visiting

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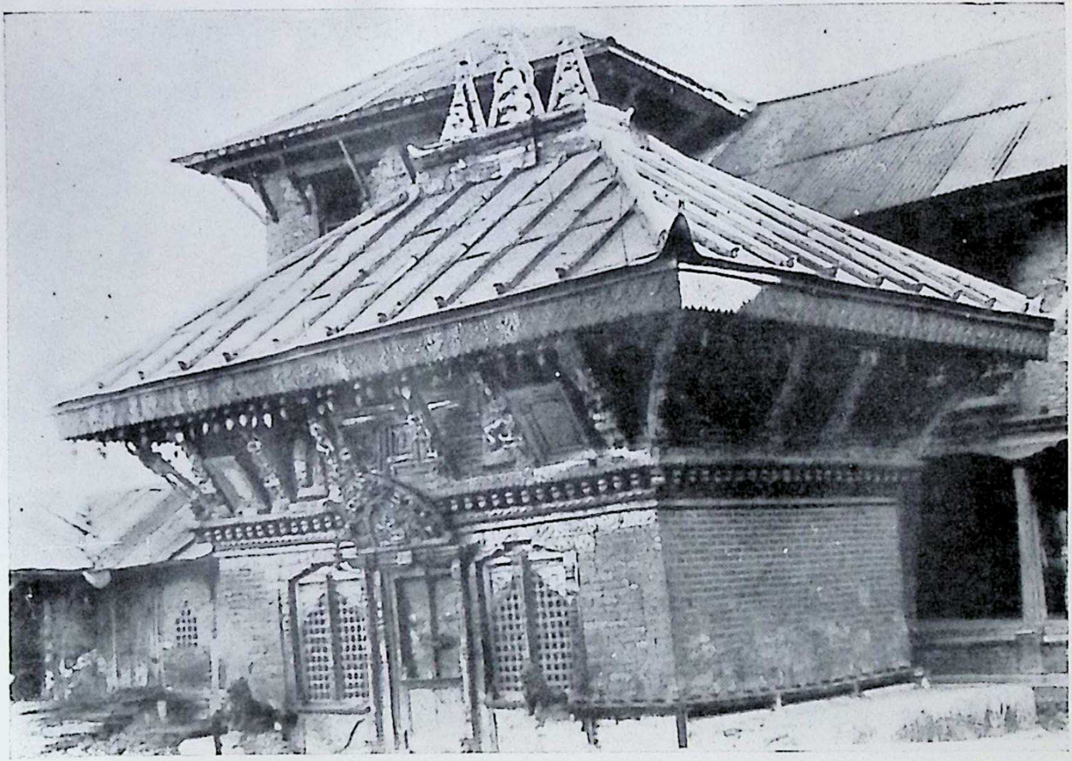
Some scholars opine that this place is called Pharping on the Dakhshinkali road of Kathmandu.

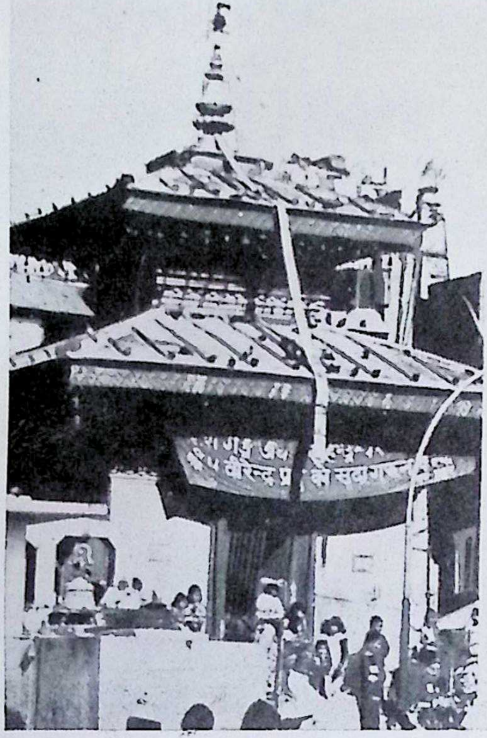
golok. He said that he had come to trace the origin of the celestial light. *Kamdhenu* said it was impossible to do so. But Brahma insisted saying it was a prestigious issue and so he decided to tell a lie by claiming to have reached the starting point of the phallus. He persuaded Kamdhenu, Ketaki (*Agave americana*), Bandhuk (*Pentapetes phoenicea*), Japa pushpa (*Hibiscus rosasinesis*) to serve as witnesses to his feat in the Himalayan region. Vishnu reached the nether world where he saw Anant, the King of serpents. Anant asked the purpose for Vishnu to visit that place. Vishnu told him to find out the root of the celestial light. Anant said that the celestial light is the *lingam* of Maheshwara, and it is impossible to find its root. So neither of them was successful in their attempts. But Kamdhenu, *Ketaki* (*Agave americana*) *Bandhuk* (*Penetapetes phoenica*), Japa pushpa (*Hibiscus rosasinesis*) gave evidence in favour of Brahma who claimed that he had seen it. Kamdhenu supported Brahma's statement by nodding her head whereas at the same time she was shaking her tail which meant that she was refuting it. So a cow's front part is regarded as unclean as a result of the curse pronounced on her for telling a lie and its hind part as sacred for its part in telling the truth. Vishnu frankly accepted his inability to find the root of *linga*. Shiva said that because Vishnu told the truth he would be worshipped in the same manner and to the same degree as he himself is. This he gave the verdict on the issue of mutual superiority in favour of Vishnu.

Shiva cursed Brahma for telling a lie, therefore, he would not be universally worshipped in his own rights ; that is why today the cult of Vishnu is flourishing and the cult of Brahma has no independent existence of its own in the society. This theme has been represented in the sculpture where Brahma and Vishnu are first seen getting astonished at the illumination of the fiery *linga* and then Brahma is shown digging the earth while Vishnu is flying in the sky to know the beginning or the end of the *linga*, and finally they are shown worshipping Shiva in the form of *linga*. It is since that time that the worship of *linga* was started. This concept has found currency among the Hindus and we find several sculptures in Nepal illustrating this theme.

It is described in the *Skanda Purana* that at this time all the *devtas* (divine beings) prayed to Shanker with great devotion and dedication. They understood that *Jyoti* or the eternal light of peace is the God Absolute of which nobody could find the head and the root. On hearing the prayers of Vishnu, Brahma and *devtas* (divine beings) Shankar became very happy. He appeared in the form of *lingam*. Such a form of *linga devta* is represented by Shivalinga of Pashupati. Beside that *lingam* Shiva appeared in his pristine form brightly illuminated, four-handed, three-eyed and riding a lion. On his beautiful body there were earrings made of live serpents, the crown had a crescent moon and in the hands there were *trishula* (trident), *damru* (drum) and a bow and arrow. On the lap of Shiva, Shakti or Parvati was sitting. Parvati looked very beautiful in her golden necklaces and bright costumes. Her body showed youthfulness and she was depicted as bearing four hands with a lotus, a mace and a trident in three hands and the fourth in a 'fear-not' gesture. She had three big eyes and her cheeks and lips were red. She was wearing a crown studded with a crescent moon. On seeing such a handsome pair, Shiva and Shakti, all deities including Brahma and Vishnu prayed. As a result of the prayers again there appeared the bright *lingam* now without Shakti. This *lingam* was very bright with three eyes, five mouths, five rosaries, a pot of *amrita*, eight hands and earrings made of snake. On the hair bun a moon lay fastened. Images on all the five sides were different. Thus the Pashupati form of Shiva *linga* apeared. This form although it was endowed with several quaities or atributes became devoid of any atributes at the time of granting boons and spoke the following words. "I am all forms ; I am the outstanding pioneer. Those people who do not worship me will be punished. Those who worship me with respect will receive protection from me. I give enlightenment to the person by putting myself in his mind day and night. I give pleasure to him and live in him as his *atma* (soul), give *punya* (virtue) and *papa* (sin) in accordance with his past *karma* (deeds) and protect him. Even a sinner if he enchants the name of Shiva or *Ishwar* will have his troubles and miseries wiped out by me and I look to his welfare and absorb him in myself. If those human beings who owing to their past misdeeds are on the



Shri Rajrajeshwari Temple.



Mahendreshwar Temple.

Pinnacle of a Temple in Deopatan.

verge of reaching hell, remember me even once will go to heaven and enjoy pleasure there. Those people who are great sinners are constantly shadowed by *Yamdut* (messenger of Yama, God of death) who is also part of myself. I can stop the activities of Agni, Vayu, Prithvi, Chandrama, Surya and Varuna. I am indestructible."

After saying so about human beings Shiva exorted Brahma to create the universe and asked Vishnu to protect it. Brahma said that the whole universe was covered with water and until it got dry there could not be any creation. He prayed to Lord Shiva to dry the water so that creation could take place. Vishnu promised to do the protection of the creatures after the creation. It is described in the *Skand Purana* that after hearing the words of Brahma, Maheshwar created Ganesh and later on created the Sun, the Moon, and Agni. The Sun and Agni evaporated the water. Seven seas were formed. Ganesh drank the remaining water. The earth appeared. In the north, the Meru mountain was formed. Several mountains were formed. In the same mountain series in the south of the Himachal mountain Nepal arose from the sea.* The sun started moving in all ten directions so that from its bright sunlight the beings could get warmth and energy. The moon started giving light in the dark night and started providing pleasant moonlight. Brahma started creating living beings continuously and at a great speed. Vishnu became active in protecting all the beings thus created. The earth became populated and Swaranpuri (Nepal) also evolved. Nepal was also known as Pashupatichetra and Maheshwarchetra which was very bright, shining and full of gold. In *Dwapar* age it became covered with mud and wood. About two thousand *lingas* were formed. Shiva gave the assurance that he would stay in the Pashupati form of Shivalinga for thousands of millions of years. Shiva also said that there would be a great forest in this area and He would be born as *pashu* or animal and would enjoy life in the midst of other wild animals. At that time he would be known as Pashupati. Then this *linga* would become buried on the earth. *Kamdhenu* (heavenly cow) would then search for this *adi-lingam*. After *Satyug* (the age of truth) his idol would become five-faced. Shiva disappeared and for witness put the impression of his hands on the *linga* From that day this area became inhabited by saints and saintly persons. Brahma also went towards Gokarna and started his great penance. Vishnu also went towards Changu Narain* and started worshipping, Lord Shiva. Ganesh also inhabited this valley. Kamdhenu also stayed in the cave of Chandra Vatsa.

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*Fossils of ammonite found in Nepal are marine.

According to another version owing to the loss of religion and charity, stone, mud and wood appeared in Nepal and the image of Pashupati was created in the place of the original celestial light by Lord Vishnu.

The *Padma Purana* describes that *linga* became the object of worship due to a curse pronounced by Bhrigu, a Hindu saint. Once Bhrigu was deputed by sages to find out who of the three gods was the greatest. When Bhrigu came to Shiva's abode and tried to enter into Shiva's room, he was stopped from doing so by an attendant who said that his master was with Devi, his consort. After waiting for some time the patience of the sage was exhausted. Bhrigu cursed Shiva saying. "Since thou, O Sankara ! has treated me with contempt in preference to the embrace of Parvati, your forms of worship shall be *linga* and *yoni* only."

The *Vamana Purana* says that *linga* became the object of worship owing to the curses of several sages. When Sati died at Daksha's sacrificial place, Shiva became so indignant that he was driven to madness. He deeply mourned the death of Sati. He went round from hermitage to hermitage. When the hermit's wives saw Lord Shiva going naked, they got sexually attracted towards him and followed him wherever he went. Their husbands, the hermits, became angry with Lord. Shiva who they thought was responsible for seducing their wives. They cursed him which made Shiva forfeit his *linga*. There was a panic all around; even Brahma and Vishnu had to intercede with the hermits on Shiva's behalf. Hermits agreed to withdraw their curse on the condition that Shiva should be represented by *linga*. Thus *linga* became an object of worship both to the gods and to men.

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*Changu Narain is on a hillock on way to Sankhu (Shankarpur) from Kathmandu.

The *Shiva Purana* mentions a legend according to which the worship of Shiva is institutionalised in the form of *linga* worship. According to it, a demon named Bhima got a boon from Rama. He started trying his newly-acquired power by attacking the king of Kamarupa. Bhima conquered the king and took over his kingdom. Bhima imprisoned the king. The king happened to be extremely devoted to Lord Shiva whom he worshipped every day by selling images of the *lingam*. Meanwhile the demon launched his campaign of making attacks on gods, abolishing religious observances and worship. The gods were also distressed and they appealed to Lord Shiva and propitiated him by worshipping the *linga*. Shiva assured the gods that he would get the enemy killed by the king of Kamarupa, then a prisoner. When the king was in profound meditation before *linga* one of the guards reported to Bhima that the prisoner was performing some improper ceremonies so as to injure Bhima, who naturally became furious. With a sword, he entered into the prison and said, "Tell the truth and tell me who it is that thou worshippest and I will not slay thee ; otherwise I will instantly put thee to death". The king undauntedly replied, "In truth, I worship Shankara ; do then what thou pleasest !" Bhima took his sword and said laughing, 'Now, behold the power of thy Lord !' As soon as the sword touched *linga*, Hara (a sound) came from it and exclaimed, "Behold I am Ishwara (God) who appears for the protection of his worshipper, on whom he always bestows safety and happiness ; now learn to dread my might !" Shiva then attacked Bhima and reduced him and his army to ashes with fire shooting out of his third eye. From that day Shiva was worshipped in the form of *linga*.

Regarding the origin of *linga* there is another modified version given by the *Linga Purana*. According to it, one day Brahma, Vishnu and Vasistha accompanied by several penitents went to pay a visit to Lord Shiva in Kailasha (the Paradise of Shiva). They were surprised to see the Lord in the act of intercourse with his wife. Shiva was not at all disconcerted by the presence of illustrious visitors and continued to indulge in the gratification of his sexual desire. It is mentioned that Shiva became obscured by passion and drunkenness, therefore, could not realize the indecency of his behaviour.

At this sight, Vishnu laughed but others expressed great indignation and anger. They said to Shiva, "Behold thou art but a devil, thou art worse even than a devil! thou hast the form of one, and dost possess all the wickedness! We came here in a spirit of friendliness to pay thee a visit and thou does not blush to make us spectators of thy brutal sensuality! Be accursed! Let no virtuous person from henceforth have any dealings with thee! Let all those who approach thee be regarded as brutes, and be banished from the society of honest folk!"

After cursing. the gods and penitents returned. When Shiva recovered his sense he asked the guards about the visitors. It is mentioned that both Shiva and his wife died in grief and in shame.

It is described that Shiva said, 'My shame has killed me!' but it has also given me new life and a new shape which is that of the *linga*! You evil spirits, my subjects regard it as my double self! Yes, the *linga* is myself and I ordain that men shall offer to it henceforth their sacrifices and worship. Those who honour me under the symbol of the *linga* shall obtain without fail the object of all their desires and a place in Kailasha. I am the Supreme Being and so is my *linga*. To render to it the honours due to a god is an action of highest merit".

Thus the origin of *linga* took place. The *linga* is Shiva himself. The *adi-linga* of Pashupati has in the world from time immemorial and it is the origin and the beginning of all beings. It dispenses our terrors and our fears and grants us the object of all our desires.

"For Hindus, the law of *Karma* governs his successive lives; the sum of his good and bad deeds determines his next life, he should always try to make his present life better than the last by sticking to moral laws, until he attains *Nirvan* (salvation) when he no longer has to come back to earthly life."

"The concept of *Jyotirlinga* (fiery or resplandant linga) which penetrates the *yoni* corresponds to the ray of light or fire from sun which penetrates the earth goodesses."

10

MERIT OF BATHING IN THE BAGMATI (SHIV GANGA)

In the Hindu religion, all important *samskars* (ceremonies) begin with a purifying ceremony in which taking a bath is considered to be very essential. Holy Hindu scriptures mention that without taking a bath one remains impure and that he gets the reward of virtue only by bathing, especially in a holy river. Rivers are considered as the source of fertility and purification. Every river is permeated with the divine essence and its water cleanses one from all sins and contaminations. In Nepal, the river Bagmati is considered to be the holiest and the most revered as the Ganges is in India. This river is attributed with the power to wash away even great sins. Therefore, there are countless temples near a river with flights of steps lining its bank. To take a bath in the river is a meritorious act. There is a touch of divinity in rivers and their water is capable of purging one of all sins.

The Bagmati (Shiva Ganga) originates from the base of the Shivpuri mountain of Kathmandu. It is a tributary of the Ganges and meets the Ganges in India.

Those people who daily bathe in the holy river Bagmati will earn religious virtues. The style and method of taking a a bath is very simple. Staunch believers in the Hindu religion take a bath daily particularly without fail on all auspicious days. Even *Pashupati lingam* daily takes a bath with the water of the Bagmati.

The origin of the Bagmati is described in the *Himavat Khanda* of the *Skanda Purana*. It is mentioned in this text that in the Himalayas, Saptarishi and Samkadik saints were living. Brahma also created saints named Kapil, Saud, Kashyap, Narad, etc. He could not, however, create the progeny. Shiva also came to the Himalayas for meditation. For facilitating the works of creation, the Ganges originated from the head of Lord Shiva, and came down flowing through the Himalayas. Brahma also worshipped Lord Shiva with great devotion. Seeing Shiva, Brahma praised him very much and said that Shiva had become very generous. At that time a few drops of water oozed out of the mouth of Lord Shiva, as he was in a very happy mood. Immediately from the hill of the mountain the holy Bagmati flew out. The name Bagmati is given to the river owing to the belief that it came out of the mouth of Lord Shiva himself. From that day onwards the river Bagmati is considered to be very holy and sacred. Those people who take a bath in it become fearless, and achieve name and fame. Lord Vishnu gave the name of this river as Brahma-Saraswati as it originated from the anterior region of the tongue of *Adya-shakti* (Ancient Power) or Lord Shiva. It is further mentioned that the synonyms are *Brahma-Saraswati*, *Ganga*, *Bagdevi*, *Bagmati*, *Shiva-Ganga*, etc. It is so written that if any one takes a bath in the holy Bagmati, their desires will be fulfilled and the river serves to redeem the earth from infertility. Those who take a bath in the river water will enjoy *dharma* (religion), *artha* (wealth), *kama* (pleasure) and *moksha* (salvation).

The river is blessed by Lord Shiva who said, "people from all over the world will worship you with great reverence. Those people who take a bath daily in your water will become free from sin and will reach heaven. Those ascetics who practice penance at your bank, will please the God and will become merged with him. Those people who take a bath even once in the confluence of the Bagmati and other rivers reap the fruits of virtues of bathing a hundred times elsewhere. Those who take a bath in the Bagmati in the days of festivals, will endear themselves to Lord Shiva and those devotees who do *abhishek* (consecration) with the water will become free from the miseries and troubles of the world, achieve all sorts of prosperty and opulence and get *bhakti* (devotion) of Lord Shiva". Those women who take a bath in the Bagmati together with their husbands get the same life partners in the next life.*

Lord Shiva then prayed to Brahma and Vishnu and asked them to create those beings who can perpetuate progeny by mating. As a result a population of 4 lakh people resulted. Different castes also evolved.

Lord Shiva further said that those people who want salvation can get it with the water of Bagmati.**

Later Lord Shiva went to his *Shivlok* and Brahma and Vishnu started worshipping at the same spot where *Jyotirlingam* (cosmic lingam) or *adilingam* was adorned. Afterwards about one thousand years later *Sapta rishi*, *Siddhi* saints came to the bank of the Bagmati when they heard about the merits of bathing here. *Apsaras* (celestial dancers) of heaven also came to take a bath in the Bagmati. About three crores and fifty lakhs of pilgrim spots were formed near the Bagmati. All the *devtas* (divine beings) and *rishi* (ascetics) left their sacred remains or memories at the bank of the Bagmati. Since then *Pashupati chetra* and the river Bagmati became holy and sanctified. At one of the holy spots, the Gaurighat in the Bagmati, Gauri or Parvati used to take a bath with its pure and unpolluted water. The river Bagmati looks marvellous as it flows towards the plains from Munjavat mountains. The confluences of the Bagmati are so holy that it has the power to wash off sins ; it is a very sacred place for offering oblation to manes. Thus, this river Bagmati is the giver of virtue for deities, demons, and other wordly people. Bathers in this river get the fruits or the results of *Vajpay yajna* and *Ashwamedh yajna*†. Those people who take a bath in the Bagmati and say prayers by repeating passages from scriptures get eternal benefits. It is especially so mentioned in the holy

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*Those women who committed Sati in the early periods in Nepal always did so at the bank of the river, especially at Pashupati where *linga* of Pashupati is adorned.

**In Nepal, those people who are declared by doctors as incurable are brought to Pashupati and their legs are immersed in the river till they breathe their last.

†Names of sacrifices or yajnas. *Vajpay yajna* can be performed in *Kali yug* (age) while *Ashwamedh yajna* can not be performed in the Kali age.

scriptures that one should definitely take a bath in the Bagmati in the months of *Baisakh* (April/May) and *Kartik* (Oct./Nov.) and at the time of solar and lunar eclipses. In the *Skanda Purana* virtues obtained by bathers in different confluences of the river Bagmati with other rivers are also mentioned. In the Pashupati area the most sacred places are *Gaurighat* and the confluence of the Sundari river (Sundarijal)*. The Sundari river was created by Gauri herself. Another sacred spot is *Rudra Ganga* (*Dhobi Khola*) which originated from the head of Shiva. Those people who take a bath in these spots become free from leprosy. Issueless women get sons by bathing in these spots.

The *Himavat Khand* of the *Skanda Purana* also describes the method and process of taking a bath in the Bagmati. Those who are great sinners consider that to take a bath according to the mentioned process will purge them of their sins if the methods of taking a bath as adopted by orthodox people are systematically followed. Still several staunch devotees feel that they are essential for obtaining great virtues. The process of taking a bath in the holy Bagmati is simple. In the evening feet and hands should be washed and teeth should be cleaned. At this time a resolution should be made to go for bathing the next day. In the morning of the next day with all happiness and becoming free from all household engagement one should go to take a bath in a holy pilgrim spot. *Dhoti* (a piece of loin) and a towel should be taken and on the way one should think in mind that he is going for a holy dip in the Bagmati. On the way to the bathing place one should not speak. Those devotees who go to take a bath in a holy Bagmati with firm determination gets the fruits of *Vajpaya* and *Ashvamedh* yajna. Those who go to those sacred places get a multitute of virtues. If one goes to take a bath riding on a vehicle then the fruits of bathing become greatly reduced. Those who go to take a bath in the holy Ganges wearing shoes on their feet are born as animals in their next life. Those who see the holy and pilgrim spots from a distance with a happy mood their bodies become free from troubles and miseries. The river Bagmati should be worshipped with folded hands, and a resolution should be taken methodically by holding *Kusha* grass (*Eragrostis cynosuroides*). *Mantras* should be enchanted during resolution.

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*This beautiful and sacred spot is near Gokarneshwar where bathing and oblation to manes are done.

If the devotees does not know and understand then he should speak in his own language the name of the month, *paksha* (fortnight), day, date, *Nakshatra* (zodiacal signs) ones name, gotra, caste, etc. He should also mention that he is taking a bath at this holy spot on this auspicious moment.* He should also express what his wish is if he has any at this time. One who is taking a bath at the holy spot should express his desire and then mention that for the fulfilment of that particular wish he is taking a bath at the holy spot. After taking his bath the devotees should make offers of rice grains and flowers to the river, worship nearby gods and pray to his personal and family deity. After doing so the devotee should meditate on Rudra or Shiva and pray to him with his various synonyms, emblems and forms. It is said that taking a bath at the origin of the Bagmati river (Baghdwar in Nepali) brings thousands of virtues. It is also said that one becomes free from the sin of having intercourse with another woman, committing theft, etc. The charity given at this spot, especially gold and cloth will bring in more virtues. Those women who take their baths at Baghdwar will have their husbands remain always devoted and sincere to them.

The most auspicious days to take a bath in the holy Bagmati are *Ashtami* (eighth day), and *Navami* (ninth day) of both the fortnights of a month. *Aunsi* (dark moon day in September-Bhadra), *Purnima* (full moon day), *Maghe Sankranti* (the first day of *Magh i.e.*, 14th January) are also days of special importance.

Devotees will get two times more virtues than on ordinary days if they take a bath on *Ashtami* (eighth day) days. Taking a bath on *Navami* (ninth day) one gets a hundred times more benefits than taking a bath on *ashtami* (eighth day), Similarly on *Chaturdashi* (fourth day) a devotee gets 2000 times more virtues, on *Maghe Sankranti* (The first day of *Magh*, generally 14th January) a million times, on *Purnima* (full moonday) ten million times. Taking a bath on auspicious day is full of religious merits. Taking a bath during solar and lunar eclipses is also a very sacred act. In this way to take a bath in the holy Bagmati or Shiva Ganga is of great virtue.

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*One of the author (T.C.M.) has enjoyed the refreshing pleasure of taking bath in Sapta rivers of Nepal, especially in Muktinath, in Varahi chetra, and in Badrinath, Kedarnath, Haridwar, Ujjain, Nasik, Varanasi, Mathura etc. in India.

"Holy water accepts the ablutions of religious bathers and helps them in cleaning them up physically and mentally and edifying them morally when they come out of the water".

11

TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE IN NEPAL

There are various types of temples in Pashupatinath area and other adjacent places mentioned in this book, therefore it is deemed essential to describe the religious architecture in Nepal, in general.

The religious architecture of Nepal can be delineated under three broad headings : (*a*) Temples (*b*) Stupas or chaityas and (*c*) Vihars or monasteries. For introducing the temple of Pashupatinath and other temples our main concern is with the temple architecture.

Temples

Based on the styles of architecture, temples can be divided into two categories : (*a*) *Shikhara* or *Nagara or* Indo-Aryan style and (*b*) Pagoda or Devalaya style.

Sikhara or *Nagara* style temples have a direct bearing on those of Northern India. They are made of brick or stone and probably this influence came in the 8th or 9th century.

The *Nagara* or *Shikhara* style temples were called in the late medieval period as *granthakuta*. The oldest temple of *Shikhara* style is located in the north west corner of Pashupati Nath area in Kathmandu. However, the other older temples of *nagara* styles could not survive as they were made of easily perishable materials. The other remaining temples date back to the 14th or the 15th century. These temples have basically common elements. This style of temples is of two kinds. (*a*) those having a shallow and perfunct or portico in front and (*b*) those supported on columned corridors. The supra structure of *Nagara* style temples possesses a tall curvilinear or pyramidal tower whose surface is broken up vertically into 5, 7 or 9 different planes. The finial is bell-shaped and is made up of parts called *amalakh*, *kalasha*, *Vijapuraka*. Sometimes, there is a portico on all the four sides of the temples or sometimes it is absent.

The most famous style of *shikara* or *nagara* style temple is the Krishna temple of Patan built in 1637 by Siddhinarsingha Malla. It has a combination of Nepalese with Indo-Aryan style. However, there are certain features of Rajputana influence also. The temple stands on two square pedestals with a slender curvilinear tower. There is a columned corridor at the base with two successive storeys of running balconie; bordered with low railings and lined with pavilions. On the upper side of all the four sides of the tower base, there are four tower niches. The architecture of the Krishna temple is slender, balanced and well-integrated. The temples constructed in the later period were copies of the Krishna temple and could not come up to the standard of the actual Krishna temple in its magnificence and splendid architecture.

The second group of temples is the *Pagoda* style at least so called by Westerners and almost universally accepted by the majority of Nepalese. Sharma (1977) pointed out that the term 'pagoda' is of recent origin ; therefore, the temples of Nepal of this style should be called *dega* instead of pagoda. The storeyed form of temples should be called "storeyed temple." One example of such a storeyed temple is *Nyatapola i.e.*, five roofed temple. Storeyed temples are called *Nitaja* and *Swataja* meaning two and three-storeyed ones respectively. However, the term *pagoda* has been very commonly used by foreigners as well as many Nepalese. *Pagodas* have projecting roofs of tiles arranged in ascending tiers, richly carved pillars, struts, doors windows, etc. The roof is gilded. They give a beautiful landscape to Kathmandu and a peculiar skyline. Banerjee (1979) writes that the serrated outline of the temples silhouetted against the sky is at once a break in the skyline and a pleasant spectacle to boot. The origin of the pagoda style of temples is not definitely known. But it is an acknowledged fact that the pagoda style of temples is indigenous to Nepal and no country either China or India has influenced it. The style has developed on its own in Nepal. The oldest pagoda style that has been reported belongs to the middle of the 7th century. Pagoda style temples are definitely Hindu in origin. They are constructed mainly of wood and brick. Metal is only used in making the finial and sometimes in roofing and laminating the facade. Pillars are spuare in their lower halves and copiously carved on the upper half which has a bracket and a beam. The *pagodas* are generally square in ground plan, although sometimes rectangular and octagonal also. The *pagodas* are generally erected over one, two or a series of pedastals. The appearance of the temple is determined by the size of the pedastals. This is evident if we make a comparison between the Kumbheshwar temple of Patan and the Nyatapola temple of Bhaktapur. Although they are five-storeyed there is less grandeur in former. There are three or four doors. The main entrance has got a semi-circular tympanum with a figure of an enshrined deity represented in the centre. On the doors there are heavily carved wooden frames. The windows are also beautifully carved. The most characteristic features of the *pagoda* are the struts placed at 45° from the vertical wall of the shrine. These struts support the sloping roof which may also be laid upon rafters. This scheme of architecture is repeated for each storey of the temple. The wall of the sanctum goes up from the base to all the storeys above and serves as the central support for the radiating roofs. The walls of the upper storey of the *pagoda* are interspersed with carved window frames. Some temples have shield in the upper storey. The metal finial in a pagoda-style temple is also bell-shaped and has usual parts : *amalkh, kalasha* and *vijapuraka*. These are collectively known as *gajura*. The complete finial is covered up with a triangular core with an umbrella on the top.

The pagoda style of temples coutinued upto the time of early Shah Kings. The palace of Prithvi Narain Shah at Basantpur, Kathmandu is a glorions example of this architecture. However, the engraved arches on the doorways of *pagodas* of Kathmandu have the influence of Moghul architecture.

Temple Architecture

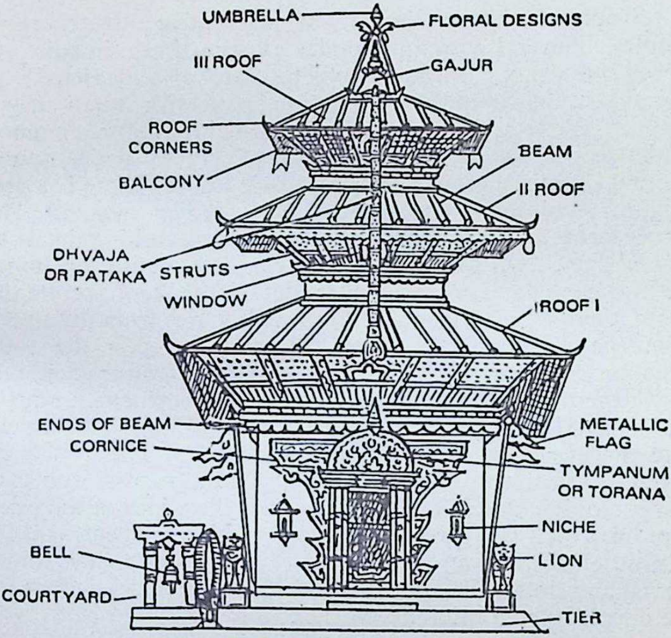
A brief survey of the temple architecture will reveal some of the basic elements found in the Nepalese temple. Though there are several individual variations, the basic temple-forms are almost the same.

The main materials used in the construction of the temples are stone, brick, plaster, cement, metal, wood, colour, etc.

The temple may be free-standing or connected with adjacent buildings. For example, Krishna Temple of Hanuman Dhoka is joined with other buildings to separate Hanuman Dhoka area and also for the support of the main temple. The temple may be within a courtyard or may not have a courtyard and be directly in contact with the surroundings. The Annapurana temple of Asan Tole is an example of one without a courtyard of its own and the temple of White Machendranath of Kathmandu provides a specimen for one which has a courtyard around it with shops, dwelling residences, etc.

The foundation (*jag*) of a temple is fairly deep (about 2·70—3·30 m deep). The base of the inner *sanctum* is very strong Stone rubbles and brick pieces are especially filled below the elevated core. The enclosure walls were made of adobe brick or of stone. Beside the courtyard-base, in most of the temples a raised platform of brick or stone or multi-stage plinth is found. The temple may stand on a base of stone or brick only 0·30 m high from the ground on a multi-level plinth. The sides of this plinth are of brick core of the lower storey. The interior of the shrine is also paved with square bricks (about 0·22 to 0·3 m) which have impressions of *mandals* (design). Around the temple generally there is a colonnaded circumambulatory passage.

The temple in general plan may have one to several storeys of various heights. Beside the temple a large bronze bell is kept hanging on stands. The bell is rung while worshipping. On the plinth there stands a rectangular or square brick wall with door ways. In recent years, sometimes ceramic tiles are also placed on the walls. The doors may be one or many in number. The functional doors also may be just one or many as the case may be. Some doors and windows mounted on the walls are false. The windows have frames of wood which are generally highly decorated.


UMBRELLA
FLORAL DESIGNS
III ROOF
GAJUR
ROOF CORNERS
BEAM
BALCONY
II ROOF
DHVAJA OR PATAKA
STRUTS
WINDOW
ROOF I
ENDS OF BEAM
CORNICE
METALLIC FLAG
TYMPANUM OR TORANA
NICHE
BELL
LION
COURTYARD
TIER

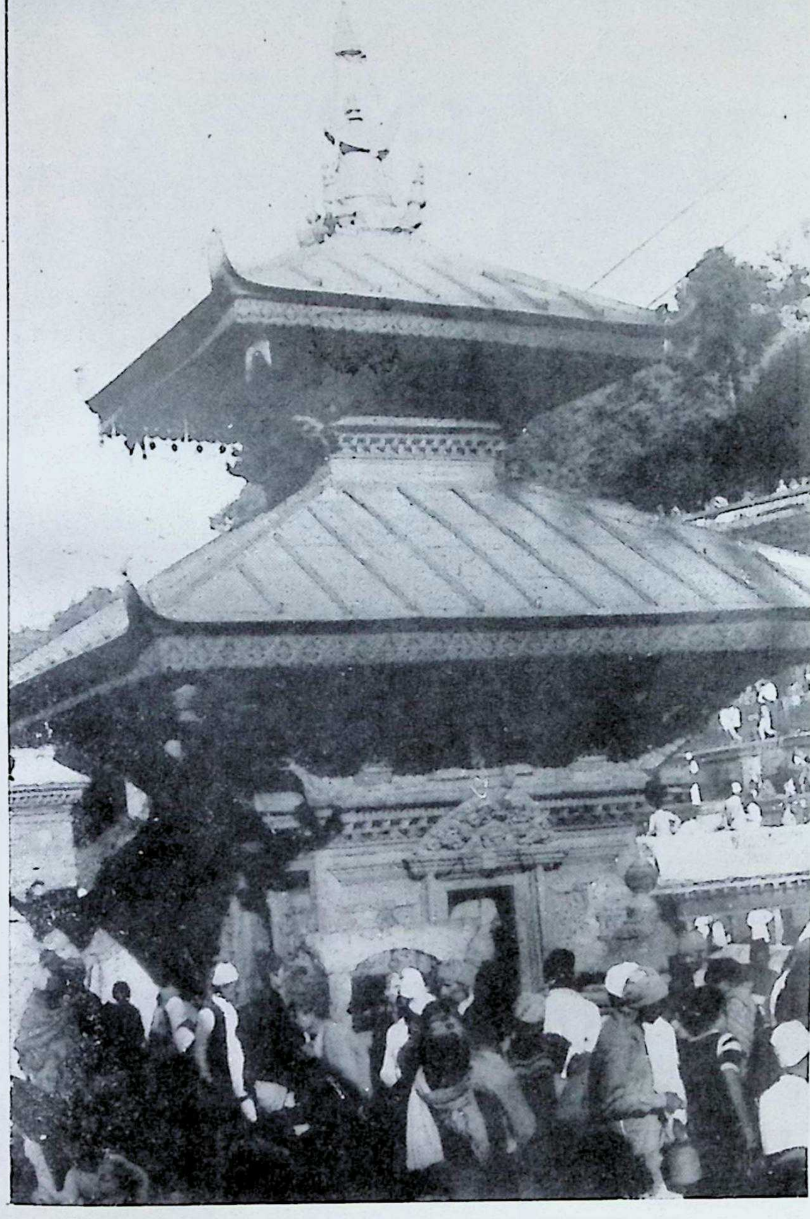
A typical Temple plan.

Above the doors and windows, semicircular flat *toranas* (tympanums) are kept. These are made of wood and metal, leaning forward at an angle. These have Buddha and Hindu deities. Each also has *Kirtimukha* (face of glory) with two *nagas* (serpents), minor deities, crocodiles, animals, human figures in devotional poses, floral motifs, etc. Wooden *toranas* are brightly painted while the metallic ones are gilded or gold-polished. Above the door frame or frames all around the temple there is a rectangular core of a broad wooden cornice with a ledge, which supports the lower ends of the wooden struts. These struts are situated at an angle of 45° to support the slanting temple-roof.

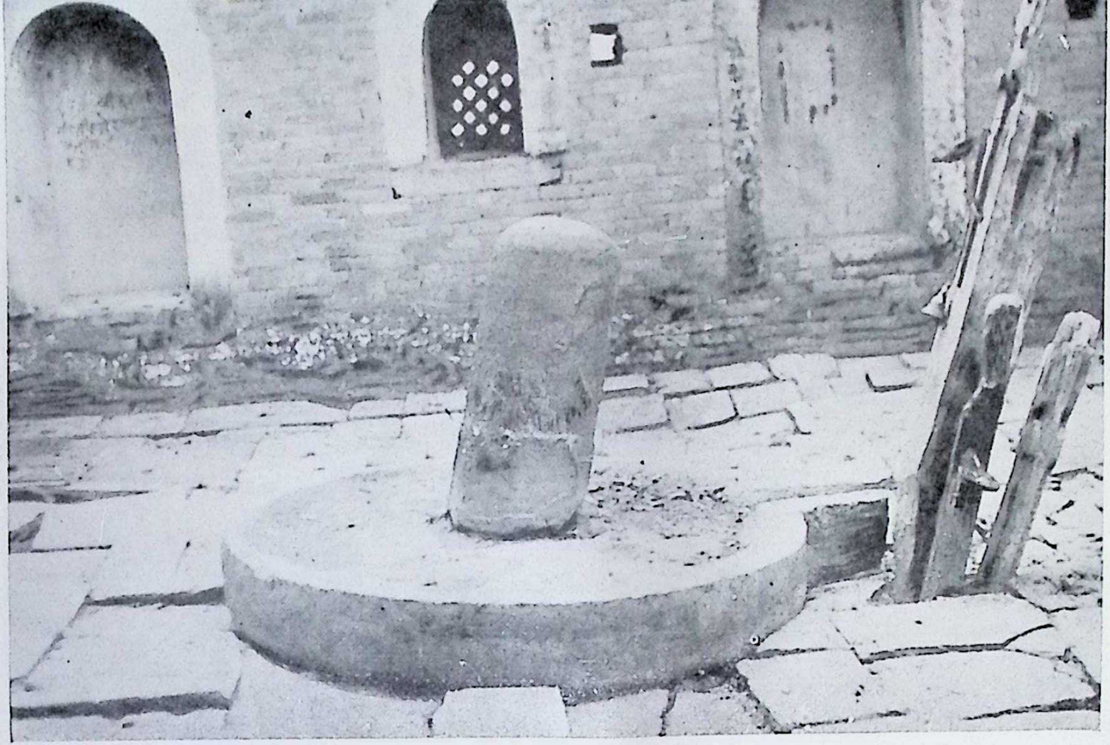
Struts are either simple or decorative structures of temples. Several gods and goodesses sometimes in pairs are carved on struts. Various vehicles are also depicted. A typical strut has a god in a standing pose with small allegorical scenes portraying minor or major deities. More common erotic scenes are depicted. Some of these poses sound unusual ; some of them are in acrobatic poses. There is a great religious significance attached to these erotic themes. The corner struts always depict strong beasts or hybrid animals as '*Sardul*', etc. On the base of the struts, mountains on stones are also carved. On the underside of the roof below the struts, there is a horizontal beam which varies from 0·9 to 3·0 from the edge of the roofs, depending upon the total structure of the temple. Several storeys are constructed, one above the other. These storeys may be rectangular, square or many-sided. Each storey has a narrower brick-core of lesser width than the storey below it. The roofs are covered with simple brick tiles supported on beams. Roofs are gently sloping and extend far beyond the width of the brick core on which they are constructed. This arrangement helps rain-water drain away and thus gives protection to the wood-carved and bronze decorated core. It also provides shelter for the devotees from rain and the sun.

Each storey has a roof with heavy beams which slope downward at angles usually less than 45° to meet the sloping struts. Strong struts are placed at the corners of the core walls. On the beams horizontally flat wooden boards are placed fairly close together and a thick layer of mud (about 2·54 to 5·08 cm.) covers them up. Finally the floor is paved with a kind of brick tiles called *tilia int* or *chickan appa* (oil-finished brick). The tiles are arranged in such a way that they interlock each other with the edges of two tiles not lying wholly in the same line. Roofs are sometimes also covered and ribbed with gilt copper on the topmost roofs. Gold sheets were also used to cover the roof in ancient times.

The roof of the Nepalese temple gives the whole structure



Parvati or Bachleshwari Temple on south of Pashupatinath.



Kiranteshwar Mahadeva, where Arjun got Pashupatshatra (weapon) to fight Mahabharata.

a unique appearance with various decorative and symbolic attributes. There are many special features on roofs. The raised roof edging is very characteristic. It is to protect the corners and the connecting wooden skeletal structure from decay. At angular points special sized tiles are placed. In some cases sloping corners are cemented to form a white raised edge. The tiles are also cemented to strengthen the roofs. At the corner of each roof there is an upward curve. Metallic roofs have a more pronounced curve. These terminate in various ornate decorations, *viz.*, floral decorations, animal-heads, etc. Sometimes, on the curves are placed small birds in flying postures. Sometimes there are leaf pendants in their beaks. In some temples, *garudas* or peacocks with fan-tails are also depicted in a bronze form. Generally, plaster and tile curves are always plain.

The roofs in some holiest temples are gilded with gold which was probably obtained from Tibet. Nowadays a mixture of copper, brass and zinc is used to make metallic roofings for temple.

Beneath the edge of the overhanging roof small bells (7·62 or 10·16 cms. long) are hung on small hooks placed all around the temple. Clapper pendants are also attached to these bells. The breeze causes the bells to jingle. The significance of these bells is to point out that devotees are doing the worship with a kind of fanfare. These small bells are often presented to the god in the temple by someone as a mark of respect or frankly for the purpose of being in the good book of the god in this life as well as in the life after this.

Below the roofs these are noteworthy metal borders called *Kinkinimalas* which are kept all along the edges of the roofs about 7·6 cm. inside from the margin. When *Kinkinimalas* are placed, small bells are excluded. At the lower edge of the *Kinkinimala* are attached bronze pendants at the lower edge.

The metal banner also hang in some temples around the roof or a little under the roof. Generally, they are under the corners only. The banner is two pronged and is rectangular in shape.

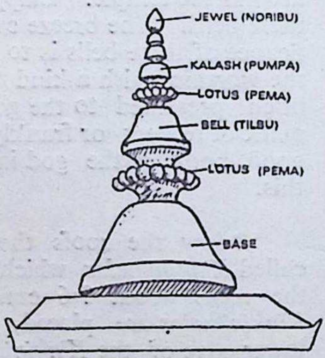
In some temples beneath the roofs there are upper level enclosures or balconies which are of various designs. Balconies are generally looking down upon the street. In such cases there are open balconies.

In some temples of Nepal, *dhwaja* or *pataka* or draping metal banners are also seen. These banners drop from the pinnacle upto the edge of the first roof from the ground, These are considered as a kind of pathway from God as he comes down from heaven to earth.

In the ornamental design sometimes under the roofs, *Kalashas* or the holy water vessels also are kept hanging. These are called *purna* (full) *Kalash*. It is considered as an auspicious sign.

Pinnacle

The crown or the pinnacle of the Nepalese temple may consist of a simple spire of plaster or group of gilded spires. Sometimes, each pinnacle is crowned with an umbrella. The shape of the pinnacle is like a bell. The style of the pinnacle also depends on the deity which is enshrined in the temple. The large umbrella on a temple or one used for other Nepalese functions symbolises protectionism from the religious point of view. There is no umbrella represented in the plaster pinnacles. Shiva Parvati or Asta yogini temple is crowned with a triple pinnacle with three small umbrellas, supported by a bronze frame. However, a single spire with an umbrella standing on a notch-shaped fork is very common.



GAJUR (GANJIRI)

In some of the temples in Deopaton, the pinnacle is very typical. There are shown four snakes as if coming down fom the heaven. These snakes are quite big with their finned tails above and heads below. The posture is a little curved.

Inner sanctuary

The inner sanctuary has an image or a symbolic representation of one or several deities. This is the focal point in a temple. In Nepal the inner sanctuary is never very spacious and sometimes is kept in dim light and in a quiet surrounding. The inner sanctuary may be with either one or four small entrances. The images depend on the gods and goddesses to whom the temple is dedicated. Surrounding the Nepalese temples are oil-lamp railings with metal basins, which are at the height of the plinth. On festive occasions at night these lamps are lighted which give off a chain of small flickering flame in darkness.

Other usual objects in a Nepalese temple are the guardian figures for eternal protection. These figures may be animals or human or divine beings. Some attending figures are also placed outside the entrance to the temples or just within the entrance. Some of the usual objects that one might find are Nandi or bull before the temple of Pashupatinath, Garuda before the Narain temple or a rat before the Ganesh temple. Sometimes a giant-size conch is placed infront of a temple.

Figures of donors and illustrious royal figures are placed atop high pillars with the front facing towards the main entrance of the shrine. The royal figures are to be prominently seen in temples of Pashupatinath ; similarly the metallic statue of King Bhupatindra Malla infront of the golden gate in Bhaktapur, the royal donors before the Taleju temple of Kathmandu, King Pratap Malla with four sons infront of the Degutale temple of Kathmandu, the statue of Yognarendra Malla in Patan are illustrious examples of such donor figures.

Inscriptions are also a common sight in the temples. They are helpful for dating a particular shrine but they are rare ; therefore, in Nepal the history of several temples is lost to obscurity.

Besides, there are in some temples of Nepal some other objects which are quite prominently displayed though they have not much to do with the architecture itself. In some temples some utensils are displayed. These are ones offered by some devout people so that they may get them in the next world or in their next life. This is typically found in Adinatha at Chobar, in the Bhagvati temple at Nala and very recently in Pashupatinath at Bhaktapur.

Horns of sacrificed animals are also kept struck in some temples. The horns serve as trophies for the deities because these horns represent victory over demons. These are therefore, symbolic representations of a joyous celebration. Besides, at the cornice level and other places large framed mirrors are also put up.

From the above described temple-architecture plan one can immediately note the plan of various temples inside and outside main temple area of Pashupatinath.

12

AN INSIGHT INTO TEMPLE OF PASHUPATINATH

(Deopatan)

Deopatan is about 5 km. from Central Kathmandu. It is a holy township popularly known as Pashupati. According to traditional beliefs the village of Deopatan existed as early as the 3rd century B.C. when this temple was also in existence. Deopatan is described by historians as a shrine-packed town with various public resting places and welfare centres* around the main shrine of Pashupatinath. Perceval Landon (1928) writes 'The holy town of Pashupati is by far the best instance of a cultural center the most part of which is a collection of solidly built brick or stone shrines. The characteristic Nepalese wooden architecture is less to be seen here than elsewhere. There is no doubt that due to the eagerness with which generation after generation has sought to do even fresh honour to the place it was found apt to pull down the work of its predecessors and replace it by finer buildings in the fashion of the day".

Pashupatinath Temple
(Deopatan)

This temple is regarded as the holiest and the most famous of all the temples in Nepal. The main temple area is not open to non-Hindus but it can be seen from an adjacent hillock opposite the temple across the Bagmati river. The river Bagmati forces its way through a wooded gorge, a few kilometers outside Kathmandu to the northeast. The stretch of the river upto about a 0·4 km is held in great reverence and it is considered as holy as the river Ganges at Varanasi in India.

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*At present there is Sharada Nimna Madhyamic Vidyalaya, Samaj Kalyan Kendra, Buddha ashram and other schools and welfare centres.

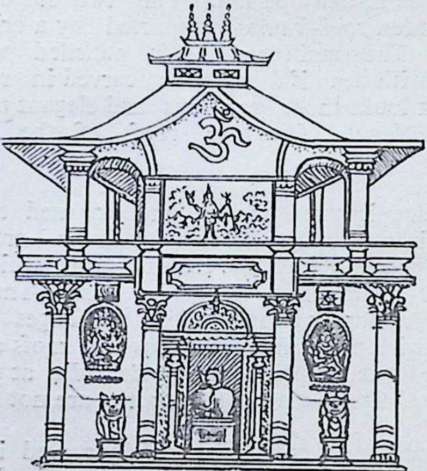
It has a most fascinating complex of temples and is laid out so magnificently and in such a colossal scale that anyone who sees it for the first time will be tremendously bewitched by its grandeur. It is something that even a non-Hindu should not miss.

The temple of Pashupatinath in Deopatan, as the village where it stands is called, is located on the bank of the river Bagmati which is considered by the Hindus as a holy river. It is a tributary of the holy Ganges which it joins in India. The temple lies north west of Kathmandu on a hillock known as Gauri-shankar. It is said that Lord Shiva and his consort lived together in this place in the mythological age.

Most hindus believe that the temple existed earlier than the first century. Historians point out that Deopatan existed in the 3rd century B.C. and the village is described as a shrine-centred town.

The present temple, however, was restructured in 1692 after it was badly damaged by termites (white ants). According to Karpatrick (1811) this temple is popularly attributed to the fourth prince of Suryavanshi Dynasty known as Pushpush Deo who made it and dedicated it to Pashupati Mahadev in the 4th century. It is believed that Adi Shankaracharya also visited this temple and renovated it in the 8th century. Most of the structural complex around the present shrine was erected in about 1640 during the regime of King Paratap Malla who resided there for some time by way of atoning for his sins. The temple was also restored during the lifetime of Mrs. Ganga Rani, wife of King Shiva Simha Malla (1584-1614). Lord Shiva's vehicle, the huge golden Nandi or the bull sitting on a pedestal in front of the temple, was probably made by Dharam Deo, the 20th successor of the founder of Pashupatinath. The entire decorative surface of the temple was constructed at the time of Chandra Shamsher, Nepal's Rana Prime Minister from 1901 to 1928. Shah rulers have also got the temple a new structural and attractive look.

At the main entrance of the temple, there is a gate which has beautiful carvings. Above it there is a large gilded tympanum with ear-rings and depictions of *Makara*, a sea monster. On the top of the main gate of the temple there is a clay model in relief of Lord Shiva standing in the backdrop of his residential place-the sacred and holy mountain of *Kailash*. This clay mound is symbolic of the great mountain associated with Lord Shiva. On the sides of the gate are the images of Ganesh and Kumar together with the moon and the sun. The main entrance leads into a vestibule from the other end of which you step down to a quadrangle in the midst of which the main temple stands.



Main gate of Pashupatinath Temple.

There are three temples of Pashupatinath in the valley (1) Pashupatinath (Deopatan) (2) Pashupatinath (Bhaktapur) and Pashupatinath or Mahandewshwar (Hanuman Dhoka). However, Paskupatinath (Deopatan) is the large and the most popular.

The temple of Pashupatinath is a large two-storeyed edifice covered with gilt copper. The architectural plan is similar to that of other pagoda style temples. Regarding the origin of the *Devala* or the *pagoda* style temple an indirect indication can be obtained from the Sundhara (Patan) inscription of Amsuvarman that the *devala* style temple had its origin in the medieval period between the times of Amsuvarman and A.D. 1349.

Sivadeva III who ruled from A.D. 1098 to 1126, added a roof to the Pashupatinath temple. This implies that a roofed temple existed in that period. The two stage structure was built of wooden roof-frames supported by a brick core on a stone base. The main pavilion is panelled with silver and gold plates with beautiful patterns carved in relief on them. Therefore, it looks more gorgeous and elegant than any other temple of Nepal. The two roofs of the balconies are screened.

The balconies are enclosed and are used as the treasury for storing in the costly offerings made to Lord Shiva. The screens are placed behind the carved struts which protect upwards and outwards from a cornice base. There is *kinkinmalla* or metal border hanging along the edges of the roofs. Small bells with pendant leaves below the roofs are kept hanging. Bronze pendants below the *kinkinimalla* at the lower edge are absent. Metal banners with prongs are not found.

The wooden struts have beautifully carved images of gods and goddesses. Struts of the lower roof of the Pashupati temple are most superbly carved and painted.

Facing West. Towards the main entrance there are beautifully and majestically carved images of Hanuman, Ram, Sita, Lakshman, Bharat and Shatrughna.

Facing South. Yudhisthira, Draupali, Bhim, Arjuna, Nakul and Sahdev.

Facing East. Balram, Guheshwari, Saraswati, Ganga, Jamuna and Vishwakarma,

Facing North. Ganesh, Brahma, Shankar, Parvati, Vishnu and Kumar. These are four struts on the upper roof one on each side beside the ones in the corners. Sixteen goddesses are beautifully carved on them. These are called sixteen *matrikas*.

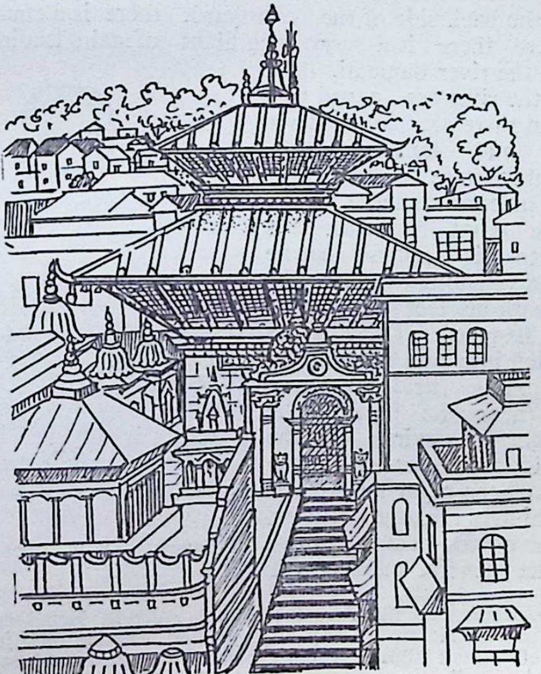
According to the *Vayu Purana*, Shiva has a two-fold nature : male and female. His female nature also became two-fold, one half is called *asita* or black while the other half is called *sita* or white. The white or mild nature became separated into *Shaktis* or energies of Shiva which developed into innumerable separate maifestations and personifications of all forces of nature, physical, phsychological, and moral intellecture. These forces are divided into *mahavidyas* (source of great knowledge), *matrikas* (divine mothers) and *yoginis* (goddesses with magical powers).

The brackets in the corners supporting the function of two eaves are in the form of *Sardul* or griffons which denote supreme powers symbolized by the deities. On he west side below these deities in the Pashupati Nath temple, a few erotic themes are depicted. Most struts in the main temple have no erotic carvings. These struts are beautifully painted with colour. Faces of semi-divine beings are depicted at the ends of the sloping ribs of the roofs. The pinnacle of the shrine which consisted of a long central spire with a rod to support a towering umbrella is fairly big. Four small spires surround the base. Each pinnacle consists of an inverted bell along with a lotus, a *kalash* and a *chintamani* (magic jewel). Beside the pinnacle, there are a trident (*trishula*), a *damru* (mini-drum) and a *pharsa* (axe) which are the emblems of Lord Shiva. There is no *dhvaja* (banner) hanging on the pinnacle. The *dhvaja* or *pataka* is considered as a pathway from heaven to earth. On the sides of the pinnacle sometimes there are weeds, found growing. Hindus believe that those are the shoots of Shivas favourite plant *dhatura* (*Dhatura stromonium*) which like *marijuna* (*Cannabis sativa*) has a narcotic effect. Shiva is also called Nilkanth (blue throated). Legend has it that Shiva drank up the fatal poison 'Kalakoot' in order to save all other gods from the effect of the poison. The poison, which would have destroyed all celestial beings, got stuck in his throat which explains why Shiva has a blue patch on the throat. Below the cornice level ceramic tiles are fixed to the inner and outer walls of the temple. The floor on the corridor around the main shrine and the interior part of the sanctum has some silver coins embedded in it by Rana Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher. On each of the four sides of the temple there is a door. Each door has a silver-polished *torana* (tympanum). All the four doors of the temple were renovated by King Mahendra. There are 3 doors, one each on the north, east and south sides. The roofs are supported by brick walls over a framework of rafters and purlins and further supported by wooden brackets called *tunals* anchored at their lower ends on the top of each wall. The temple has a plinth of about one metrer in height and is surrounded by a double railing which has on it several open oil lamps made of brass. There are four lamp stands one on each of the four sides while there is an additional one on the south side. The lamps fed with mustard or sesame oil are lighted at the time of varioue festive occasions. At the sides of the steps leading from the courtyard off the temple floor, stone lions which are the guardian animals, are placed.

In the Pashupati temple there is an inner sanctuary which is also made of brick overlaid with white tiles. It has small entrances which are partially closed from the base. Above the partially closed doors are tympanums. The inner sanctuary has the Pashupati form of Shiva *lingam*. In a small niche recently 8 idols of the late King Mahendra and Queen mother Ratna facing all the directions are placed. All the important items for the worship are safely kept on a few shelves. On the southern side there are two big bells installed on the top of pillars. On the south side in the main sanctum there stand two big idols, about 1.2 m long, of Ganga and Yamuna. However, their vehicles are not shown at the base. On the west side here are two images of *Samsar devta*.

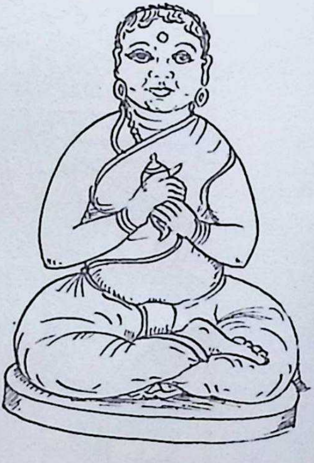
In the courtyard, there are several porches where one can sit down for saying prayers. The gigantic image on a pedestal near the main entrance, i.e., on the west is that of a gilded bull or Nandi, the vehicle of Lord Shiva. It is about 3 m. long and 1·5 m high. It is a massive figure and is the biggest metal sculpture in Nepal. The Nandi is kneeling down in a gentle reverential posture. According to a popular mythological story. Shiva was on the verge of being defeated by a bull that represented an evil spirit. Shiva accepted to be the master of the animal and made him his vehicle or conveyance (*vahana*).

There are three images of Nandi in this temple. First the golden image of Nandi which is in a kneeling position is just outside the main sanctum. The second Nandi, comparatively a smaller one, also in gold and in a sitting position is infront of the first, and the third Nandi which is made of silver is in a standing position inside the sanctum. The middle and the innermost Nandis are of a smaller size. All these bulls are presented in a graceful posture as they are all absorbed in



Pashupati Nath (eastern gate)

reverence for the Lord. In every temple of a Shiva a bull is depicted in one or another style. Inside the temple, large mirrors are recently fixed probably for people to look at themselves in them while applying *chandan* or sandal paste (*Santalum*) on their foreheads. On the right side of the temple there is a large bronze trident about 6·0 m long supported on a pole. On the south side of the temple, there are various statues of former kings, queens and other distinguished persons. The metallic statue of the late King Mahendra cast in a devotional mood is an excellent masterpiece in the art of metal work in Nepal. In one small enclosure all the Kings of the Shah dynasty are also depicted. These are made of brass polished with gold. In the enclosure on the south-east side there is what is called the statue of Jaysthiti Malla* and his wife.



Samvatsar with conch shell.

At the back side of the courtyard, there is a small gateway where there is a very long flight of stairs leading right down to the river Bagmati. Both sides of the river are paved with stone and there are some sacred bathing and burning ghats. These ghats are used as the funeral places. When a person is at the point of death he is brought to this spot so that he can be lucky enough to breathe his last with his feet washed by the holy Bagmati. These ghats are divided into two portions by an adjoining bridge. Those that are near the base of the long flight of stairs on the eastern side are reserved for the members of the royal family and other high ranking officers. While the others past the bridge are for the general public. On the other side of the river there are numerous small stones representing Shiva idols which were constructed in honour of some famous widows of persons. Some say those may represent all the pilgrimage spots of Hindus as in early days it was very difficult to visit the holy places of India owing to the difficult terrain and the lack of transportation.

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*Historians write that Jayasthithi Malla ruled in Nepal from 1380 to 1394 or more. He was a very distinguished capable and judicious ruler and left a great influence on the social organization of Nepal. He also introduced Brahman predominance into the daily life of the country.

For those who are wandering in the world which is characterised by the evils of Birth, Death, Old-age, Sickness and Suffering and are caught in the wheels of delusion (*Maya*), characterised by three trends: light (*Satva*), movement (*Rajas*) and darkness (*Tamas*), the only way to be saved is to take refuge in God with pure heart.

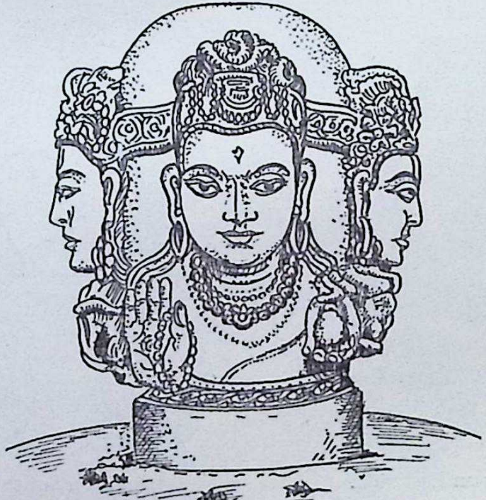
13

PASHUPATI FORM OF SHIVA LINGA

Pashupatinath is held in great reverence by all the religious minded people of Nepal. In Nepal there is a harmonious intermingling of Buddhism and Hinduism. It can aptly be said that in Nepal, Buddhism and Hinduism, criss-cross each other in perfect co-existence. Nepalese Brahmans not only tolerate but accept Buddhism. According to *Nepalmahatmya* "To worship Buddha is to worsbip Shiva". The *Swayambhupurana* in reciprocation recommends the worship of Pashupati. A Hindu pilgrim always visits a Buddhist temple where without feeling any sense of qualm he adores Buddha. Sometimes both the religions adore the same image under different names for example what is Avalokiteshwar to one is Mahadev to the other. Several Hindu gods are absorbed in Buddhism. Similarly several Buddhist gods are absorbed in Hinduism. Thus the Nepalese pentheon has three elements united in it. The first are the aboriginal deities such as *Nagas*, the second are the Hindu deities, the third are Buddhist deities. All the three elements are combined to form what is known as Nepalese religion. Pashupatinath is considered to be the guardian deity of the country by both Hindus and Buddhists.

Pashupati-form of Shiva-linga.

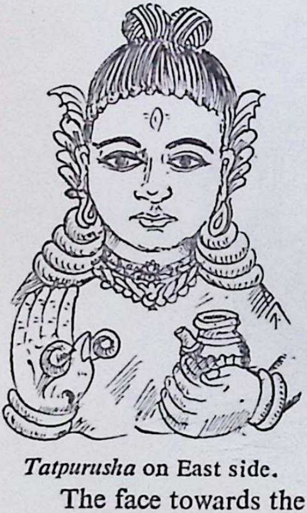
The most famous and the most venerated *Shiva-linga* not only of Nepal but of the rest of the Hindu world, is enshrined in the temple of Pashupatinath which literally means 'Lord of Animals'. In Nepal, Shiva is most popularly worshipped in the embodiment of Pashupati. The *linga* (male sex organ) stands fixed in a *yoni* (female sex organ) and it has five faces, four of which are on four sides while the fifth (presumably on the top) is shapeless. It is believed that this *Shiva-linga* has a cosmic effect. Pashupati is also known as *Parasnath* and according to popular beliefs, it has the power of alchemy which turns all kinds of metals into gold. Nobody except authorized priest is allowed to enter the precinct in which the image is housed. The height of the Shiva-linga is between 0.9 to 1·20 m. It is believed that the *Shiva-linga* of Pashupatinath is self-existing. It was accidentally found and unearthed at that particular spot. According to a popular story, a cow used to let her milk fall automatically on a sandy mound. Being surprised at this unusual thing, people started digging at this spot. This was how the *Shiva-linga* of Pashupatinath was discovered in the ancient past (No date known). All the kings of Nepal who ruled over the Kingdom did so on behalf of or with the blessings of Lord Pashupatinath who is, through the centuries, regarded as the presiding deity of the country.



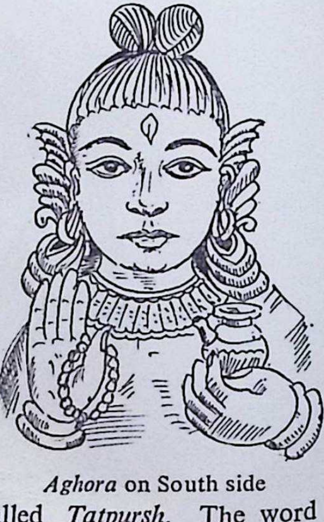
Pashupatiform af Shiva linga

Pashupatinath is symbolic of peace and prosperity not only of Nepal and of the Hindu world only but of the whole world also. Therefore, Nepal, is mentioned in the *Puranas* (*Skanda Purana*) as Pashupati Kshetra (area). There is no parallel to the Himalayas anywhere in the world which are known mostly for their beauty and holiday. In this Himalayan region, it is the belief of all that religion protects the religious people and that attachment and immortality are called animal instincts. To get release from all bonds of life there is *Parmeshwar* or the Supreme God who is at the same time *Mahakal* (God of death), destroyer of enemies and *Mrityunjaya* (conqueror of death) or Pashupati (Lord of the souls of all).

In Nepal, Pashupatinath exists in all his grandeur and magnificence. Pashupati is the true form ; four Vedas are in his mouth. He himself is the symbol of extreme happiness. Pashupatinath, as already mentioned, is five-faced i.e., depicting five Brahma-forms looking towards the four directions of east, west, south and north.



Tatpurusha on East side.



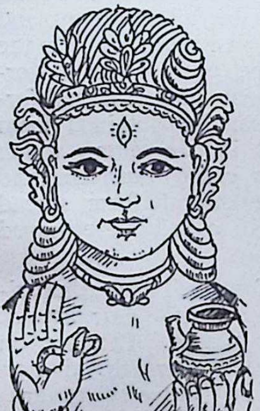
Aghora on South side

The face towards the east is called *Tatpursh*. The word that means *Parambrahma*. *Parampursh* is the supreme man.

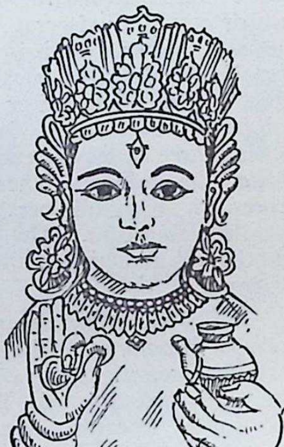
Indra is *Tatpurush* of the eastern direction. He is the king of all deities. Therefore, the face towards the east is called *Bhava* in the *Vedas* which has three eyes and is symbolically propitious. Therefore, *Tatpursh* is worshipped in the eastern direction.

The face of Pashupatinath towards the south is called *Aghor* i.e. calm-form. This is the symbolic representation of Yamaraj, the God of Death. He is also three-eyed and bears a dreadful form. On the right ear there is a ring made of a snake. On the left ear there is an ordinary ear-ring. This form is called *Ghoraghor* which means it is terror-striking for enemies and benignant for devotees. This form is also called in the *Vedas*, *Sharva* or *Sarva* i.e., omnipresent taking care of the welfare of every being. This dreadful form is both calm and terrifying and in this form the awe-inspiring aspect of Rudra is worshipped.

The north side of the Pashupati form of Shiva-linga is called *Vamadeva*. The north face is very peculiar. On the left ear there is a *nagkundala* (an ear-ring of a snake). On the right side there is a lock of hair. The hair-lock on the right



Vamadeva on North side



Sadyojata on West side

side is similar to that of a lady and is just like a crown. The right ear has an ear-ring which is just like a lotus. The right half of *Vamadeva* is bedecked with ornaments that adorn a lady, therefore, this part is beautiful. Vemadeva is benign and boon-giving and is worshipped as such.

The face of Pashupatinath towards the west is called *Sadyojat* which is the ruling deity of the western direction. *Sadyojat* means just born, therefore, it depicts the face of a child. It has three eyes. On the head there is a crown. Ear rings on both the ears are similar. In the *Atharva Veda* the western face is called *Pashupati*. This face is expressive of a very happy mood and is, therefore worshipped as such.

On all faces of Pashupati two hands are shown. Each right hand has a sixteen-beaded rosary of 12-furrowed *Rudraksha* (*Elaeocarpus*). In each left hand, a *Kamandalu* or *Kalash* is full of *amrit* or ambrosia.

The upper face which is shapeless is called *Ishan*. This face is the symbolic represen'ation of sex. Therefore, it is also called *Lingasharira*. *Linga* is shown without any hands, feet or any other viscera. The upper form is the main *Pashupatinath*. Therefore, it is regarded to be full of energy and happiness. It is the nucleus of all forms, therefore, it is the greatest form of Shakti or energy. The upward face is worshipped for knowledge, for the fulfilment of desires and forgetting three forms of energy which can be obtained from *Soma*, Sun and fire. There is a point in the centre, which represents the middle part of the space called *Antriksha* and is called *Ishanrudra*. The beams of the central form spread out in all directions, therefore, it is called eleven-rayed Rudra.

The *Tantras* also describe the five faces of the Pashupati-form of *Shivalinga*. Hindus also believe that the four faces of Pashupati represent four *tirthas* or holy places. The face on the north looks towards Badrinath and Kedarnath, that on the south towards Rameshwaram, in the east towards Jagannath and on the west towards Dwarika (India).

"The Idol of Pashupatinath is not a *Shivalingam* only but it is also resplendant with omnipresence of Shiva-Shakti".

FIVE ASPECTS OF SHIVA*

PANCHABRAHMAS ISANDAYAH

[INDIVIDUALLY AGHORA, ISANA, TATPURUSHA, VAMDEVA and SADYOJATA]

As in Pashupatinath temple

Aghora	Isana	Tatpurusha	Vamdeva	Sadyojata
Rameshwar South Yamraj ; three-eyed	Pashupati Upper (shapeless)	Jagannath East Indra's ; three-eyed	Badri Narain North	Dwarika West Happy face of child ; Three-eyed
Right ear has an ear-ring made of a snake Left ear-ordinary ear-ring	Nucleus of Shakti or energy. Point in the centre called Ishan rudra	Ear-rings on both the ears are similar.	Left ear-Nagkundala (ear-ring made of a snake) Right side-Hair lock is just like that of lady Right ear—Ear-ring of a lotus.	On head there is a crown. Ear-rings on both the ears are similar.
Two Hands : Right hand-Sixteen-headed rosary of 12 furrowed rudraksh Left hand-water pot or *Kalash*	Without any hands	Two hands as in Aghora	Two hands as in Aghora	Two hands as in Aghora

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*Some modifications are found in various Pashupati form of lingas in Nepal.

14

FACTS AND LEGENDS ABOUT PASHUPATINATH

There are several facts and legends about Lord Pashupatinath. Some of them are given here. It is said that Shiva used to live here in the form of a deer (*mriga*). He was hiding here just to save himself from hunters. It is mentioned that this *mriga* had only one horn. Therefore, the area of the temple is also called *Mrigasthali i.e.*, the place of deer.

It is described in various epics that on the spot where Lord Pashupatinath's temple stood there was a big fire which had been blazing since the origin of the universe. This fire or *agni* went out later on. It is mentioned in the *Himavat Khand* that a cow belonging to Nem Gopal used to drop milk on the *Jyotirlinga* of Pashupati. Gopal had the holy *darshan* of Lord. Bal Krishna Sama (V.S. 2022) has beautifully written that in the Vedic Period, *Yajnas* were performed in the *Vedi* (site of yajna) near this perennial fire. Around this *vedi*, four walls were created. This has led to the construction of the Nepalese style of temples and Pashupatinath temple is the example of that style of architecture termed 'Kailash Koot Shaili' as described by the famous scholar and poet *Sam*.

Pashupatinath's idol has been compared as a negative force, the electron, to Shakti (energy) and as a positive force, the proton to Shiva and the energy or electricity thus produced is *Shiva-Shakti*.

It is mentioned in the Nepalese chronicle that the mother of a king in the seventeenth century appointed Nityananda Swami as the Chief Priest at the Pashupati temple. It is said about this priest that he never bowed to Pashupatinath. Once the king went to see if this was true. Nityananda Swami immediately understood the purpose of the king's visit. After the main worshipping ceremony he bowed to Kama Devta when all of a sudden one of the legs of the God came off and fell down. He then bowed to Dharm-shila which also immediately split into two. Later Swami bowed down to a stone which also broke into small pieces. When he was running to bow to Lord Pashupatinath he was forcibly checked by the King. Swami died after this happening.

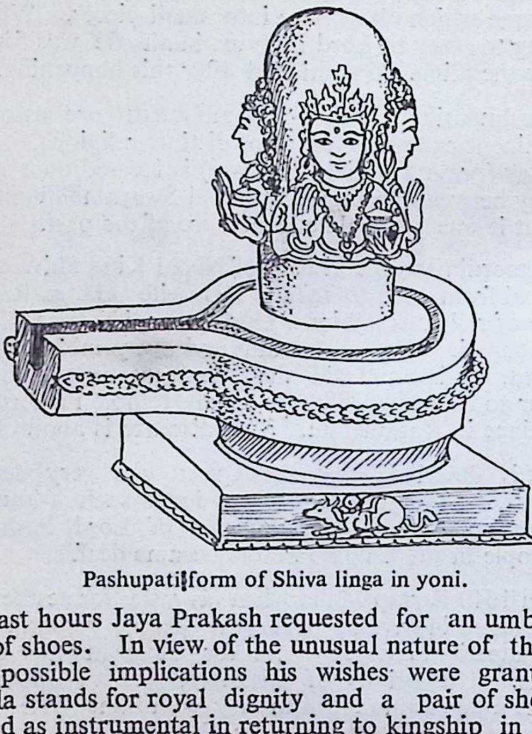
Pashupatinath and Swayambhunath are associated with the eminent examples of two distinct religions. The British Embassy (present Indian Embassy) is located on a spot exactly midway between Pashupatinath and Swayambhunath. People say that it was a calculated measure of the past.

According to the history of Nepal King Shiva Singh ruled in Nepal from 1585 to 1614. His wife Ganga Rani was in charge of religious affairs. During her life time the temples of Pashupati, Changu Narain and Swayambhunath were all restored. It is also said that the Queen caused a rope of honour to be suspended between the temple in Pashupati and the palace in Kathmandu. This distance is about 4·80 km.

It is described that the Queen was very devoted and religious. At the moment of her death such a loud noise of lamentation arose from the *lingam* of Lord Pashupati that the people in the neighbourhood became deaf.

In 1640 Partap Malla when his taste for aesthetic perception resulted in frivolity made the people resentful. He fled to Pashupati and stayed there for three months to expiate his sins. The priests of Pashupati got an opportunity to squeeze a large amount of money from him. The result was the coming up of the existing architecture of Pashupati.

History points out that Jaya Prakash Malla had to surrender Kathmandu Valley to Prithvi Narain in 1767 owing to the curse he was subjected to for his folly in robbing the treasure house of Pashupati. Prithvi Narain Shah undermined the influence of Jaya Prakash even by the religious propaganda in which 2000 Brahmans willingly lent their help. According to history when Jaya Prakash Malla was mortally wounded he was asked to express his last desire. He said he wanted to be taken to Pashupati to die in the royal *ghat* (funeral bed). It will be further interesting to mention that in the last hours Jaya Prakash requested for an umbrella and a pair of shoes. In view of the unusual nature of the request and its possible implications his wishes were granted. An umbrella stands for royal dignity and a pair of shoes, was regarded as instrumental in returning to kingship in the next life. Prithvi Narain Shah sent him the items he had asked for, but forbade their use during the lifetime of Prithvi Narain Shah and his son. Jaya Prakash Malla was laid upon the royal slab near Pashupati where he died.



Pashupati form of Shiva linga in yoni.

According to the history Chandra Shamsher, one of the Rana Prime Ministers, invested one lakh of rupees, from the interest of which food and conveyance is given to the needy pilgrims on their way to Pashupatinath, during the Shivratri festival. This assistance was to be used between Bhimphedi and Kathmandu. Upto this time HMG of Nepal distributes several items especially to the saints and seers who visited Kathmandu during the Shivratri festival. Chandra Shumsher always asked the people to be devoted to Pashupati and he himself used to pray to Shri Pashpatinath for blessing on his people. One of his maxims is worth quoting here—

"......our country's motto is that one's mother and motherland are superior even to the heaven which appeals to everyone in every country—no matter where your home is, in snow-covered regions, in sandy plains, among rocks in the forest or in any conceivable spot anywhere in the world. The land of birth has the first claim upon us and a compelling charm to which we have given the name of rich plenty elsewhere what could be more sweet and sustaining to one than one's mother's breast ? Be loyal and devoted to your country, be straightforward and true to the salt you eat. May the most high Sri Pashupati and Sri Guhyeshwari who in their mercy watched over you continue to do so for all time to come".

History points out that the treasures of Pashupatinath have not been spared even by some kings. Jaya Prakash Malla for meeting his expenses did not spare the treasures of Pashupati, even the appurtenances of the deity, the pinacles and the gilt articles of the temples. It is mentioned that the Nepal Samvat prevalent in Nepal till 1769 was introduced by Rajhava Deva of Thakuri Dynasty with effect from 20th October 879.

It is mentioned as *Pashupati bhattaraka Samvatsara* to make a dedication to Lord Pashupatinath. Banerjee (1980) writes that it can be inferred that the founding of the era may have been connected with the renovation of the temple of Pashupati at Kathmandu on the date signified.

It is also mentioned in the history that in A.D. 1349 Pashupatinath Temple was sacked by Sultan Shamsuddin Ilyas of Bengal. In the Swayambhunath Stupa a stone slab inscription of the year 492 refers to the damage made to the temple of Pashupati. In an Itumbahal stone slab inscription of the year N.S. 502 *i.e.* A.D. 1382 Jayasimharamavardhana is described as one who got the temple of Pasuhpati reconstructed.

It is mentioned in the history that the temple was destroyed by termites in 1693 and it was rebuilt by Bhupatendra Malla. The work of restoration was carried out jointly by the queen mother Riddhilakshmi and the king, as described on a Thyasaphu. However, the style was retained unaltered.

There is a very famous legend that why Vasuki Nath Temple has been built up near Pashupatinath. There are some precious stones in the treasure of Pashupatinath. They are *Nagmani* (gem of cobra), *Gajmukta* (gem of elephant), *Mandukmani* (gem of frog), *Paras mani* (gem of alchemy), *Suryakanta mani* (gem of sun), *Chintamani* (fabulous gem). It is said that a cobra was stealing *Parasmani* at the end of the month *Shravan* and taking it to the river Bagmati. To check this theft Vasukinath was consecrated.

The santalum of *Shri Khand* (Nepal.) or *Chandan* (Hindi) is brought from Mysore of which *Shri Chakra* or *Shri Yantra*, the symbol which represents Shakti the divine power is made on the head of Pashupati. It motivates the universe and is essentially female. According to Tucci (1969) such *mandalas* are made by isosceles triangles with their epices looking upwards and five others with their apices downwards ; they are of various sizes and they intersect one another. In the middle there is a point, the *bindu* the mysterious matrix. The five downward facing triangles symbolize five aspects of *Shakti* while the four upward-pointing ones symbolize Shiva. The eight surrounding petals symbolize the lotus of creation. It is made on the head of Pashupatinath before *Shringar* or make-up ceremony takes place.

The *chandan* which is given to the devotees is obtained by rubbing wood of *Singer* (local tree). This is done by an old person and a woman living adjacent to the temple. It is sold to the priest for 2 Rupees per *Kachori* or *Katori* or a small bowl.

The *lingam* of Pashupatinath is a not only Shiva *lingam* but is the representation of *Shiv Shakti* as on its face Parvati is depicted.

Therefore, *Charnamrita* (ambrosia after bathing) is distributed to devotees. Generally *Charnamrita* is not distributed in the worship of Shivalingam. Red flowers which are generally offered to goddesses can also be offered to Pashupati.

Pashupati *lingam* represents five *brahma*, 5 grosser elements and five substances.

The five grosser elements are the following : (1) *Akasha* (firmament) with the property of sound (2) *Vayu* or air with the property of tangibility (3) *Tej* or *Jyoti* (fire or light) with the property of form of colour (4) *Apas* (water) with the property of taste (5) *Prithvi* or *bhumi* (earth) with the property of odour or smell. These represent *Prakriti*, the originator of creation. According to the *Sankhya* philosophy, the liberation of soul or *purush* from the fetters which bind it in union with *prakriti* is the supreme desire of a mortal being.

Five substances or *dravya* are curd, milk, *ghiu*, honey and sugar. These are very dear to Lord Pashupatinath.

There is a very interesting event about Pashupati that has recently taken place. In the year 1974 Jagat Guru Shankaracharya of Shingri visited Nepal. He prayed to the late King Mahendra to worship the *lingam* with his own hands. King Mahendra consented. However, the present chief priest did not agree to this proposal and requested the king to reconsider his command. At that time *Bada Guruju* was Shri Khagendra Raj Pandey.

The present chief priest requested the king that in the *Vidhan* of worship of Lord Pashupatinath laid down by Adi Shankaracharya was that the priest born in the south of the Vindhyachal mountain *i.e.*, of Karnatak, Maharashtra and Andhra can only worship Lord Pashupatinath. He should be well placed in the *Vedas*. He should be initiated with *Pashupatstrata Mantra*. He should have a family. Most of these conditions were not fulfilled by the Jagat Guru Shankaracharya.

King Mahendra revised his order and said that in the matters of the Pashupatinath affairs the opinion of the Chief priest becomes final. Shankaracharya was not permitted to worship Pashupatinath with his own hands.

There is another incident recently when Jagatguru Shankaracharya of Kanchikoti visited Nepal. He insisted for establishing a statue of Shankaracharya inside the temple. However, the chief priest did not agree to that idea and it was not carried out.

King Mahendra also dropped his plan to affix 1000 coins in the main sanctum. However, on the suggestions of the priest that nobody can walk on the coins of the king, the plan was not carried out. (The coins fixed on the circumammbulation path are not of the king but of the Rana Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher).

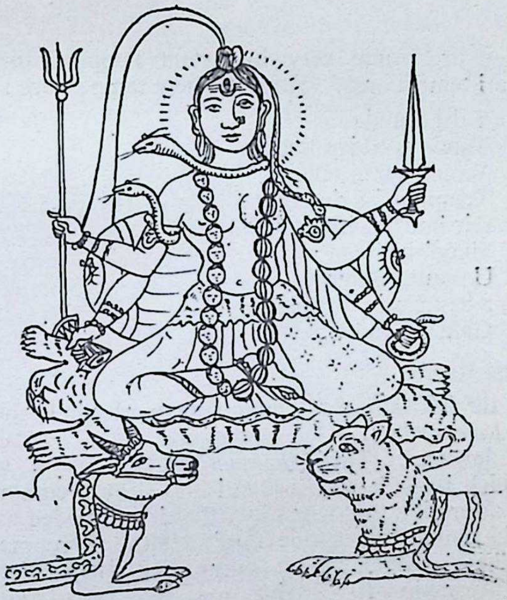
It will not be out of place to mention here for the information of general readers that the idols in several famous temples of India *viz.*, Jagannath, Rameshwar, Triupati, Balaji etc. can be worshipped inside the sanctum santorum only by Nepal King and not by anybody else including the President and Prime Minister of India.

There are several other facts which indicate how considerate, generous and benevolent Nepal kings are in the matter of religion.

There are two big statues on the western side of the main sanctum santorum of Lord Pashupatinath. It is said that these big images are of *Samsar devtas* established by some Malla King. These *Samsar devtas* are offered some non-vegetarian dishes specially brought from the temple of Jaya Bageshwari Devi. These non-vegetarian items are shown from the main gate of the courtyard on the west side. This sort of offering is not *Vedic* but based on the *Shakta* system of worship.

The Radio Nepal begins its programmes every morning at 6'O clock with devotional song in praise of Lord Pashupatinath. It is followed by the religious and devotional songs including those of Pashupatinath specially on Mondays.

The Royal Coat of Arms also include Lord Pashupatinath in the centre. In it the lord is depicted as having four hands and in a sitting posture of *dhyana mudra* (meditation pose).



Ardhnarishvara Shiva (above bull), Shakti (above lion)

"Pashupatinath is a great place of pilgrimage (*Tirtha*) in which one has to spend part of life for getting substantial blessings.

15

TEMPLES IN THE PREMISES OF PASHUPATINATH

There are some very important temples in the main Pashupati-temple area. Some of these temples are :

1. Tulsi Kunda
2. Tandava Shiva temple
3. Vasuki Nath temple
4. Temple of Krishna
5. Kirtimukha Bhairava
6. Sixtyfour linga
7. Unmutta Bhairava
8. Satyanarain temple
9. Ganesh temple.

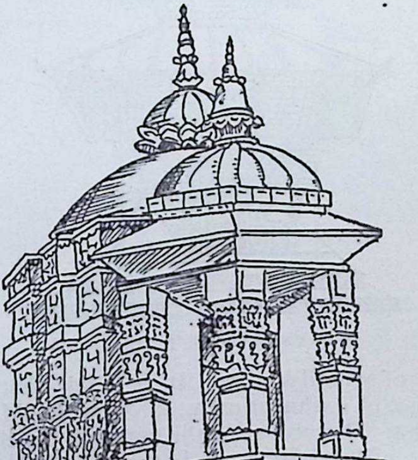
Tulsi Kunda

On the left side of the main courtyard of Pashupati there is Tulsi *Kunda* which is a rectangular vase. Tulsi is grown here for devotees. Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) is a very sacred plant which is dear to Lord Vishnu. Tulsi commands great respect, adoration and worship. Tulsi is regarded as incarnation of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. Circumambulation of the plant for seven rounds every day is a virtuous act. Women worship *Tulsi* with wet rice or *akshat*, flowers, vermillion and sweets. The worship of Tulsi is performed by keeping *Shaligram* the sacred ammonite found in the bed of the river Kali Gandaki of Nepal and it is regarded to be Lord Vishnu himself.

Tulsi blesses the devotees and helps them have plenty of riches, progeny, health, happiness and religious virtues. The women, who worship her will be blessed with long life for her husband, longevity for herself and prosperity, fortune and wealth for both. Worshipping of Tulsi blows off the impending calamities and rubs out the stains of sins.

TANDAVA SHIVA TEMPLE

This is a typical temple of *shikhara* style. It is made of cement and stone with beautiful sculptures. Women in different dancing poses are depicted on the walls of this temple which is about 2·4-3 m. On the back wall of the temple facing west is a most beautiful sculpture of dancing Parvati. It is a unique and superb sculpture. Inside the temple there is a *lingam*. Some other idols are placed behind the *lingam*. Probably these stone sculptures were fixed somewhere else but are now placed inside this temple.

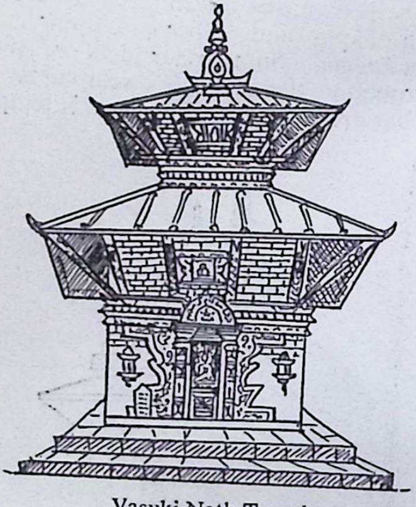


Tandava Shiva Temple

One should not miss to see this magnificently carved temple.

VASUKI NATH TEMPLE*

This is also a small pagoda-style temple. The temple is dedicated to Vasuki, one of the snake gods. Snake worship became popular in Nepal from the year 1640, at the time of Partap Malla, a king who built this temple to house the image of Vasukinath. It is said that the king had a dream in which the king of snakes, asked him to build a temple dedicated to Vasukinath. The image is small, is made of black stone and has a canopy of several snakes. It is said that before the *darshan* or visit of Pashupatinath, devotees should worship at this shrine first. According to the common belief, snakes are the favourites of Lord Shiva and therefore, they would be worshipped prior to the worshipping of the master. There is a narrow passage for circumambulation of the temple.



Vasuki Nath Temple

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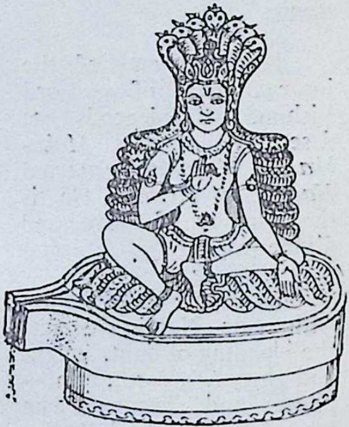
* This temple should be preferably called Vasukinath and not Vasuki Narayan.

There is only one small gate of the temple. The temple is two-storeyed and is covered with gilt copper. A small inscription lies by the side of the main entrance near the tympanum. There are four struts on each roof. Intertwined snakes are shown on the struts. On the roofs four ribs are placed with heads of semi-divine beings. The struts in the first storey are four with two only at the corners. On the second storey, there are two struts with one strut at each corner. Struts are also carved with erotic scenes on their base. The pinnacle is simple and has a metallic symbol of a mirror (*Jalaina*) which is used in auspicious ceremonies.

The image is about 0·60-0·90 m. in length and is in a sitting pose with two hands. One is in *varada mudra* (boon-giving posture). The other hand is holding the tail of a snake. The image sits on a *Jaldhari* (yoni or female organ) which represents the female organ or *yoni*. The inscription has the mention of Vasuki Nath but *strotra* (holy verses) written on it is of Krishna, which points that Narain, Shiva and Krishna are all treated as one and the same god.



Vasuki Nath, the image in the temple

There is a popular legend that in ancient times a 999 headed Vasuki was performing meditation on the bank of Bagmati near Aryaghat. Lord Pashupati became very happy and in honour of him declared that this area would be called Vasuki *chetra* (area). It is also said that the pilgrimage of only those people will become effective who first of all have *darshan* of Vasukinath prior to that of Pashupati.

MUKTI MANDAL

It is also one of the porches having a roof of corrugated sheets. It is called *Mukti Mandal*. It is said that for getting salvation or *Mukti* one should sit under it. Facing towards east and south there are some small struts with erotic names. Under this *Mukti Mandal* several saints and ascetics meditate and pray for achieving salvation.

KRISHNA TEMPLE

The image of Krishna is established in an enclosure facing towards the north. The image is about 0·60-90 m in length. It has two hands and is playing a flute. The image is made of black stone.

Krishna is one of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu. His legends are described in the *Mahabharata*, *Bhagwat Purana* and *Harivamsa Purana*. He is the symbol of love and divine joy.

Krishna's identification with Nar Narain depicts the blending of light, might and glory *i.e.*, earth, atmosphere and heaven. The love of Krishna and Radha is an allegory signifying a union between the supreme man and Nature from which the universe gradually arose.

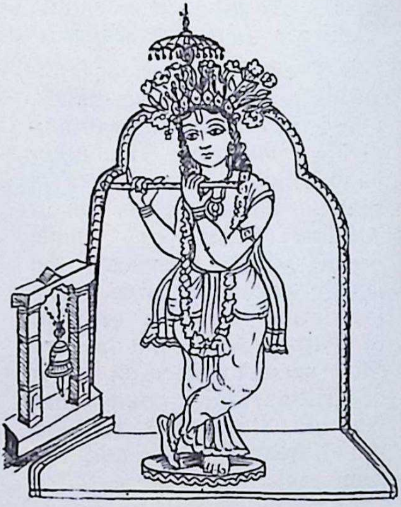
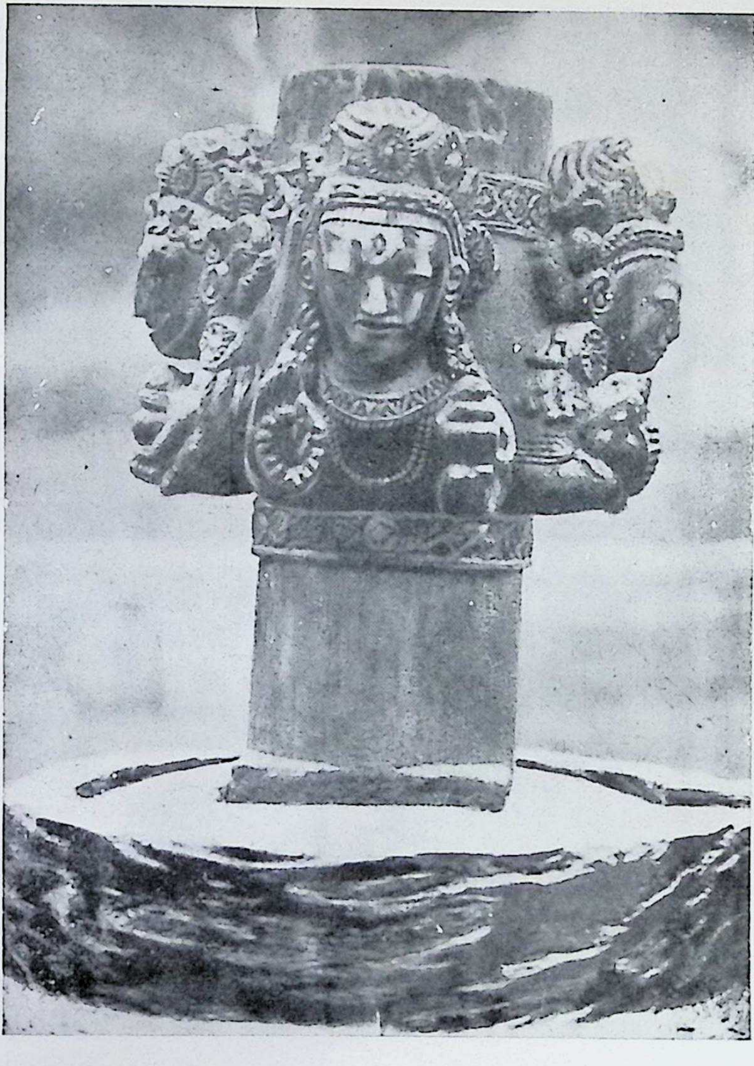
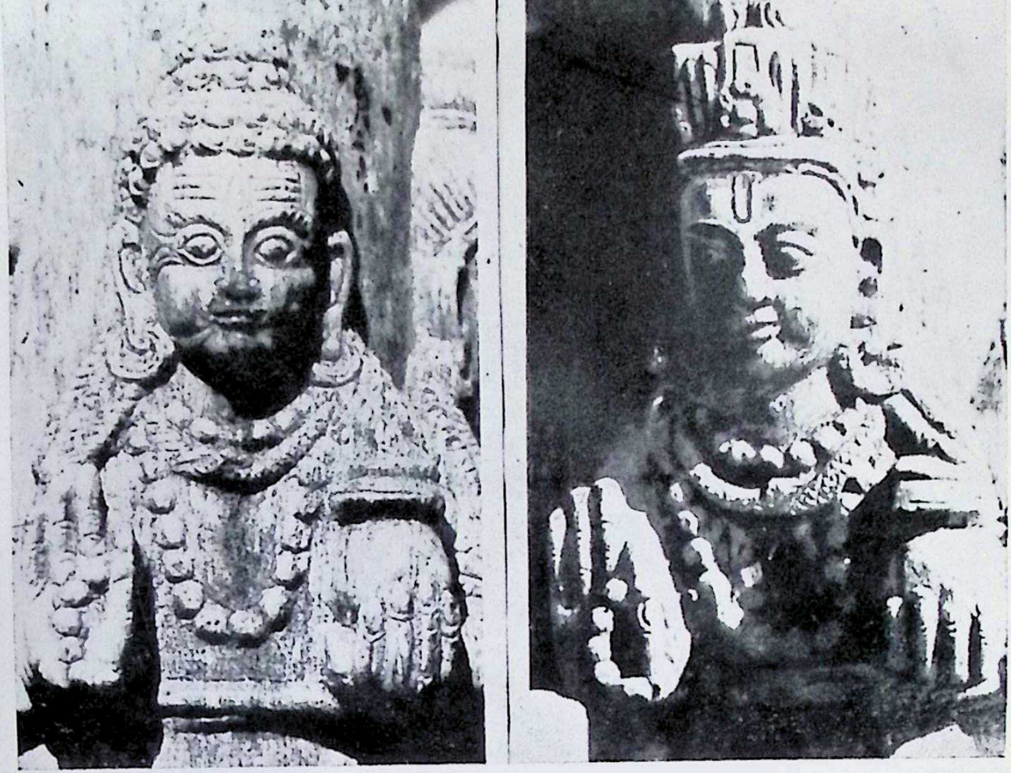


Image of Krishna with flute.

The enclosure was earlier used as *Bhajan mandal* for enchanting devotional songs and prayers. It is said that the idol of Krishna is established owing to the reason that the priests and old Brahmins worshipping and living in Pashupatinath were finding difficult to go to Krishna Mandir in Patan for worshipping on the day of Krishna Janmasthami, the birthday of Lord Krishna which falls on the eighth day of the dark fortnight of *Bhadra* (August or early September). There-



Pashupati Shiva linga in yoni.

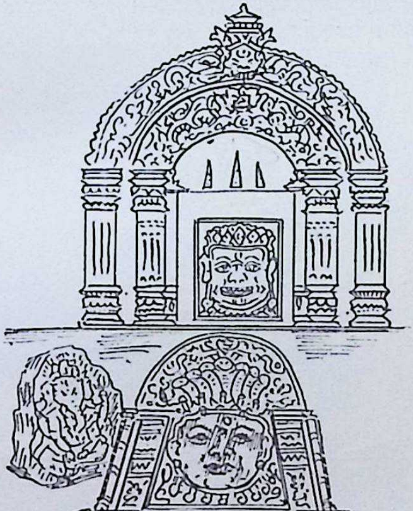


Various forms of faces of Pashupati idol.

fore, to have holy *darshan* of Krishna and for enchanting prayers, this idol of Krishna is established. The idol seems to be a very recent one and is made of marble. Krishna is two-handed and holds a flute in his hands.

KIRTIMUKH BHAIRAV

Bhairav is established on the ground floor at the south-east corner of Pashupatinath courtyard opposite the golden gate on the south leading out to an assembly of Shiva *linga*. It is the only place where sacrifices are allowed. However, because of the strong objections made by many Vaishnavites, sacrifices there have been held up. There is an image of Ganesh also on the side of the Bhairav. Sacrifices are also offered on the south-facing Ganesh.

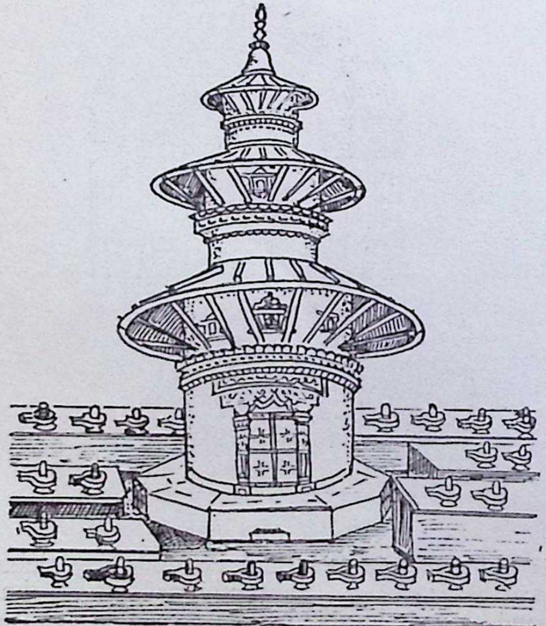


Kirtimukh] Bhairav

It is said that this Bhairav was once a demon whose hunger was never ended. He worshipped Shiva who became pleased and blessed him that his hunger would be satisfied only after eating his own flesh. Bhairav happily cut his own flesh and denounced his viscera. When only the head was left out then Lord Shiva became extremely happy and gave a boon that you would always remain on the south side of the temple. Bhairav was also named *Kirtimukh* Bhairav. The priest who worship this god is not a Brahman.

SIXTY-FOUR LINGAS

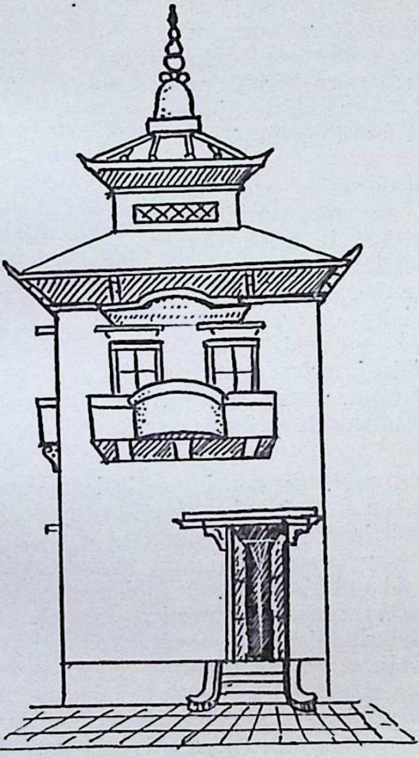
Towards the southern side of the Pashupatinath temple outside the main temple there is an open courtyard with a small round temple. It is called sixty-four lingas also in Nepali while actually it has *Shiva lingas* inserted in *yoni* that are mounted on small elevated platforms. It is said that those who circumambulate these Shiva-lingas become exempted from having to run the cycle of 84 lakh births after death in the present life. There is a common notion among the Hindus that a man attains *moksha* (salvation) or become free from this cycle of birth and rebirths.



Sixty-four Lingas

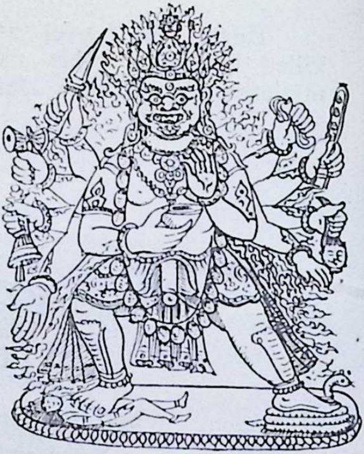
UNMUTTA BHAIRAV

This is the fearful aspect of Lord Shiva, in which he killed his father-in-law named Daksha Prajapati. As the mythology has it, once Daksha organised a *homa* ceremony (religious sacrifice) in which he intentionally did not invite Shiva, his son-in-law and Sati Devi, his daughter. Sati, however, came to know about it and went to her father's



Unmutta Bhairav Temple

house in spite of her husband's strong objections. But Sati became a gatecrasher only to be insulted by her father. Consequently, she jumped into the sacrificial fire. Shiva, who was furious, made short work of the ceremony with the help of his messenger Virbhadra Mahakali. Lord Shiva himself took a ferocious form.



Unmutta Bhairav

In this form his penis is shown in an erect position. It is said that it being the most masculine form of the god, those women who suffer from frigidity or are childless should touch this organ, if impossible, in privacy with their own organs. It is said that some women did try this technique but without any successful outcome, so far as our knowledge goes.

The small enclosure housing a big image about 3·0-3·6 m. in size of Unmutta Bhairav is a single-storeyed edifice. The metalic image of Bhairava is ten-handed, but has only two feet. His left hand carry a *nagpash* (mace), *trishula* (trident), a severed human head and *bhumi sparsh* (pointing towards earth) and one is in *abhaya mudra* (protection gesture). His right hands carry a khukri, a drum (*damaru*), a bell and a bowl respectively and one is in *varada mudra* (boon-giving pose). Around the neck he wears a garland of snakes. On the background of the head, flames of fire are depicted. On the head, Virabhadra, a messenger who killed Daksha, is shown. Eyes look indignant and under a foot is shown Daksha, father-in-law of Lord Shiva. This Bhairav is situated about 20 steps towards the west side. It is described that King Lakshmi Narsingh Malla V.S. 1641 (1584) established this beautiful image of Bhairav for protection of his progeny. Outside the edifice there are

11 photos in glass frames showing the whole hierarchy of the present Shah dynasty.

Towards the south side of the main temple there are a few remarkable things. There is one big hall which is called *bhajna mandal*. On one side of it there are 8 *Asthamatrika* together with one additional image of *Dakshinkali*. On the side of Unmutta Bhairav is sitting, an idol called *Samvatsara*. It is said that he blew the conch shell at the zero hour of the Vikram Samvat (Era) began with his blowing the conch shell. Just outside the yajna mandala there are some statues of the donors and famous saints. First in the series is Makkai Subba (tharu) with his four wives at the back. Makkai Subba used to offer maize to monkeys and cows and hence his nickname Makkai Subba which means a corn officer. He started the tradition of *Mahasnan Puja* on the Purnima day. Then there are some Malla Kings with their wives. In the corner is *Vashistha Rishi* (Raj Guru or the chief priest of King Janak). On the ground there are symbolic representations of *navagraha i.e., Shani, Shukra, Rahu, Ketu, Mangal, Buddha, Brihaspati, Chandra, Surya.*

Turning towards north just by the side of the great bull or Nandi there is a statue of Hanuman, the monkey god.

SATYANARAIN MANDIR

It is a small temple facing east. It stands on a raised platform towards the main gate of Pashupatinath. Inside the temple there is a very famous idol of Satyanarain Lord Vishnu in a standing pose. This idol is about 1·2 m with usual emblems and is a very superb example of the art of Nepal. The greatest peculiarity is that the idol stands on *yoni* (female organ).

The idol of Lord Vishnu is probably for the assembly of Hindu trinity in the temple of Pashupatinath. This also indicates that in Nepal Vaishnavism and Shaivism are syncretic.

GANESH TEMPLE

It stands on the east side or the temple. The idol of Ganesh is rather big and it bears the usual emblems of Ganesh. Nothing is very special about it. Ganesh should be worshipped, according to Hindu customs, even before the worship of Lord Pashupati.

Besides there are a large number of other temples and images which are of minor importance. It is said that during the Rana regime, the Ranas were getting temples and images constructed owing to the religious ambitions of their family members. These idols and temples were not old. Sometimes some idols were taken out from other spots and consecrated in these temples.

"Seek refuge in Him alone with all your Being. Through His Grace you shall obtain Supreme Peace and Eternal Abode." *Gita*

16

SUPERB ART IN THE PREMISES OF PASHUPATINATH

There are some superb art in the Pashupati temple area. Just in front of the temple there are big Nandis which testify to the quintessential metal work of Nepal. The metal art of Nepal has been famous all over the world since middle ages. The Nepalese metal art is cast solid. The main method of making bronzes from medieval times to this day is *Cire Perdue*. Good and illustrative examples produced by the *repousse* methods are found in artistic sculptural designs of the temple roofs, doors, banners, etc. Bigger images are usually hollow and are cast in separate parts ; later on they are assembled and articulated. Small images are usually cast solid while very small ones are always cast in a solid and complete form.

The skill of Nepalese art is manifested in the composition of royal figures mounted on the top of pillars. These statues are superbly made and they look elegant. The best example is the royal gilded figure of King Mahendra on a pillar just infront of the southern entrance of the main temple. The royal figure is perfectly and elegantly depicted. On the southern entrance in the main temple complex are some other images made mostly of brass polished by gold. They are generally small in size and are mostly hollow cast. These images are a true representation of their customs, expressions and beliefs. The statue of Jaya Sthithi Malla and his wife is also magnificent.

The stone sculpture is also very superb. One masterpiece is reclining Vishnu on the eastern side of the courtyard of the temple. It is called '*Buddha Neelkantha*'. *Buddha* stands in Nepali as elderly. The image of Lord Vishnu is about 0·9 m. long and has four hands. The usual emblems are lotus, conch, chakra and mace. This beautiful representation is almost similar in art work to that Buddha Neelkanth or its replica in Balaju garden.

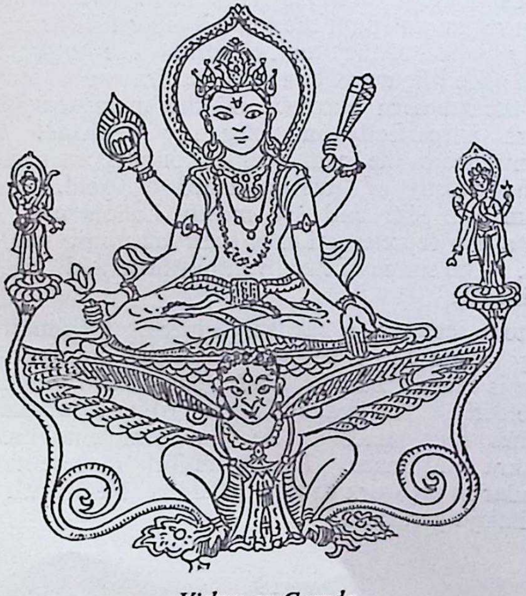
Some of the stone images probably are of Brahma and Dattatreya. Those images are small and are placed before a Shiva linga in a superb *shikhar* style temple called Tandava Shiva temple which has the impact of India. The sculpture of women carved here is very well done. This temple stands on the left hand side when one enters the temple. It has marvellous stone art.

Pashupati Form of Shivalingam

Small Pashupati Form of *Shivalingas* are depicted on the northern side of the main courtyard of Pashupati. These *lingas* are very typical of Nepal ; they are not sculptured anywhere else. They show the great imagination of the Nepalese artists and sculptures inspired by the *adilingam* or *Jyotirlingam* of Pashupati and is completely similar to that of Pashupati except in some minor details.

Vishnu on Garuda

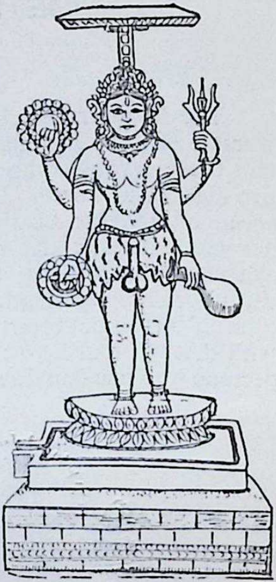
This sculpture is *in situ* on the left wall of the gate on the east leading towards the Bagmati river. Garuda is shown with



Vishnu an Garuda

a man-like face with its forehands stretched. On it rides Vishnu in a sitting pose with four arms having lotus in one shell, in another mace and in the third *chakra* in the fourth, lotus. The niche represents the heavenly abode of Lord Vishnu and Garuda called Vaikuntha (described in chapter 36).

In this sculpture, Vishnu is not accompanied by Lakshmi. Otherwise this stone sculpture resembles another beautiful sculpture in *situ* on the left wall between Kotlingeshwar Mahadev temple and Mahendreshwar temple in Kathmandu near the Hanuman Dhoka complex. This sculpture is also called Changu Narain.*



Kama Deva, image at Deopatan.

KAMA DEVA

In some small niche in the eastern wall of the main courtyard of temple there is the representation of Kamadeva. This is one of the masterpieces in the stone sculpture. Shiva in the form of Kamadeva is depicted in a standing pose. The emblems are unique. The image is with four hands. There are discs in two hands, a trident in the third and a water pot or *Kamandalu* in the fourth hand. Shiva is shown in full youth. There is *kirit* (crown) on the head. There is a rosary around the neck. Round the waist a piece of cloth is carved. The genitalia is shown in orgasm *i.e.*, highly eversible condition. The depiction of *lingam* or the male sex organ in such a beautiful sculpture bears the impact of erotic themes in Nepal. Such images of Kamadeva are also in Rajrajeshvari temple on the bank of the Bagmati, near public funeral *ghats*.

There is a beautiful metalic image of Unmutta Bhairava. It is one of the masterpieces of metalic art.

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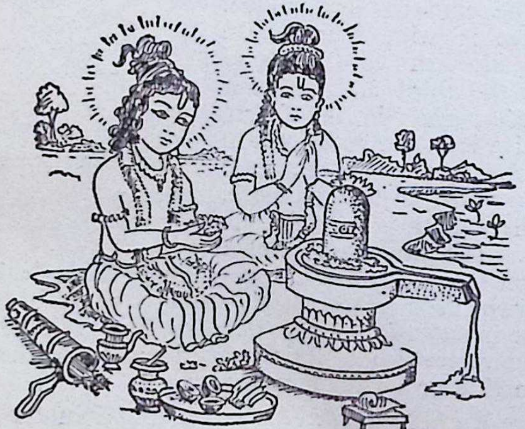
*Changu Narain is a temple of Vishnu about 13 km. east of Kathmandu and about 4 km. north of Bhaktapur. It stands on a hill.

17

METHODS OF WORSHIPPING

The *Himavat Khanda* mentions the great importance of the worship of Lord Pashupatinath. It is so described in the book that those devotees who stay in Pashupati *chetra* (premises) for five nights and worship Lord Pashupatinath in terms of *Panch upchar* after taking a bath will earn great *punya* (virtues). Those devotees who enchant *Shiva Mantra* with a concentrated mind can even surpass Indra, the King of Heaven. One who worships Lord Pashupatinath becomes free from the bondage of the cycle of births and rebirths and occupies a position that ranks with that of pious *devtas* (divine beings). Those enlightened persons who enchant *Guheshwari Mantra* even once and worship



Ram and Lakshman worshipping Shivlingam.

the goddess with great devotion earn the virtue which is equal to the fruits accruing from giving charity and alms, and from fasting and going on pilgrimages. They become one with Lord Shiva himself and reaches *Shiva Lok*. If people offer oblations to manes in this land, their ten million ancestors will be absolved of all sins. Those devotees who bring water from the river Bagmati and offer it to *lingam* of Pashupati, go to *Rudralok* and their ancestors also get redemption. Those who offer food to Brahmans get the same food items in another world.

Regarding the mode of worship of Pashupatinath it is, as described in the holy scriptures, essential first to have a *darshan* of Vasuki Nath, who is the friend of the Lord. Those who worship Lord Pashupati in a systematic way become as good as *Chakravarti Raja* (the Champion King).

Those devotees who offer a rosary of sandal, will be free from their sins. Those who offer *Panchamrit Abhishek* (milk, *ghiu*, sugar, honey and curd) earn great virtue and go to the heaven and then to Shiva Lok after death. One who gets the *lingam* bathed with *ghiu* (clarified butter) goes to heaven. One who gets the *lingam* bathed with curd goes to Vishun Lok. One who gets the *lingam* bathed with the juice of sugarcane goes to *Vidya dhar Lok*. By bathing with good fragrant things, devotees go to *Gandharva Lok* (the Land of the Gods of Music). One who gets the *lingam* bathed with fresh cow's milk attains *Shomlok*. The bathing of the *lingam* with fresh cold water ensures liberation from this world. Those who worship the *lingam* in 16 ways, will have all their ambitions fulfilled and they will get to live in the mountain of Kailash. Those who circumambulate Pashupati with great reverence, become very beautiful, attractive and devoid of sins in this world. Those who offer sweets will live long and those who worship by burning incense and cotton wicks will have beautiful eyes and will become free from sins for several generations. Those who dance and sing songs in the temple and remain vigil throughout the night will get to live in the mountain of Kailash. Those who give charity in the temple, will get *amrita* (*ambrosia*) to drink and in the end go to *Swarga* (heaven). Those who perform *yajna* will live in heaven for 60 thousand years. People of any caste or sex can get imperishable wealth, grandeur and prosperity, by worshipping the Lord.

Panchamrit Abhishek (consecration by five things) is offered by the priests daily. The devotees, who want to offer *Panchamrit abhishek* can get it done by the temple priests. The minimum fee for *Abeishek* is Rs. 51. This fee can be given in advance to the priest who will subsequently arrange for the *Abhishek* (Consecration by *ghiu*, milk, honey, sugar and curd).

Enchanting of *Rudri mantra* is also done. Usually devotees can offer almost anything to Lord Pashupatinath. Generally flowers, garlands, bel leaves, and sweets are offered by everyone.

In Nepal, generally sweets are not offered to the Lord, as Shiva is primarily an ascetic and in that form no food is generally offered. Though it is not a peremptory rule, people do offer sweets also along with their devotional prayers.

Pashupatinath is worshipped in two ways :

1. Daily worship and
2. Special worship.

Daily worship.

The temple opens at four every morning. At that time only one door facing west remains open. While at half past nine all the four doors are opened. From four O'clock to half past nine in the morning the temple-*bhandari* (storekeeper) looks after the temple and he offers garlands and other items that devotees bring to offer to the Lord and in return he gives them *chandan* (wood paste). *Chandan* is prepared by rubbing the wood of a certain kind of fragrant tree* against a stone slab. Sondalwood is not used for making *Chandan*. The post of a *Bhandari* (storekeeper) is hereditary and about four generations have passed of the present Bhandari. There are four priests who are Brahmans from South India attending on Pashupati. At about 9.30 in the morning the elegant adornment or the attire of Pashupati is taken off. At about 9.45 the *lingam* is bathed with *adikalash* i.e., water brought from holy places i.e., *tirthas* of Nepal/India. First of all *Kalash* or the holy pot is sanctified and worshipped ; then holy water is poured in it and with that sacred water the *lingam* is bathed. From 9·45 to 12·30 the *lingam* is bathed with the holy water of the Bagmati which is brought in *Kalasha* (holy pots) from the eastern gate for holy *snan* or bathing (take care not to touch the Brahmins at this time). Pashupati is bathed with hot water from *Bal Chaturdashi* i.e. (14th day of dark moon fortnight in *Mangsir* November or early December) upto Ghodajatra in *Chetra* (March or April). The water for bathing Pashupati is heated in a small enclosure in the east side. The bathing of Shiva *lingam* is very significant. During bathing *Rudri* is enchanted by the priests. *Rudri* is a hymn to Shiva which *devtas* (divine beings) also enchant. *Rudri* is generally of the following types :

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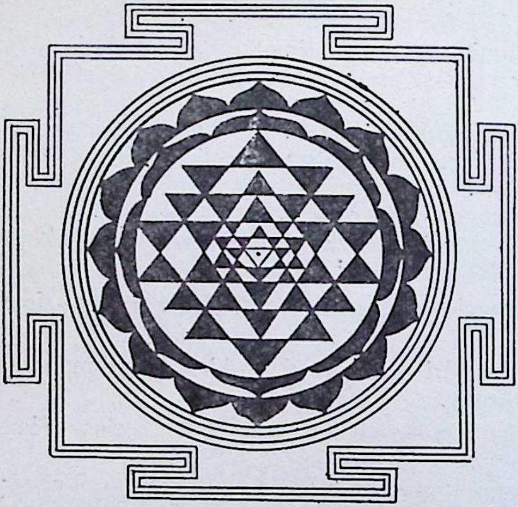
*These trees grow wild in Nepal.

Akrudri—enchanted by 1-11 Brahmans—time duration 1 hour.

Maharudri—enchanted by 11-121 Brahmans—Time duration 2½ hours.

Lahurudri—enchanted by 121 Brahmins—Time 1 hour or more.

Enchanting of Rudri and worshipping of Shiva by *Panchamrita* are considered to be a most virtuous act. After daily bathing and *rudri path*, Linga is bathed with water from *Purna Kalash* (water brought from different holy places i.e., *tirthas*). Between 1 to 1.30 p.m., the *Lingam* is elegantly adorned and is attired in gorgeous dresses of golden cloth. *Tilak*, *Netra* (eyes) and *chatra* (canopy) are also used to embellish it. On the head of Pashupati *Shri yantra* is made. *Shri yantra* is a symbolic depiction of *Shiva-Shakit*. In the adornment, all the faces are attached to *Kirit* or the crown with pendants and necklaces. *Arti* (circular movement of a lamp) is performed by offering incense and camphor. *Chamar* (fly-whisk) made of yak's tail is also swayed before the Lord. Mirror is also shown to the diety. At this time *Shehnai* (musical instrument) is played. When the adornment is complete at about 1·30 P.M., *Balbhog* i.e., food is offered to Pashupati. The food includes *Haluwa* (pudding of semolina), fruits, water, etc. *Balbhog* is prepared by the *Bhandari* (Storekeeper) or a Brahman. After *Balbhog*, *Bhog* is offered. It includes rice, pulse, *khir* (rice pudding), vegetable, achar, chutney etc. The food is prepared by the assistant priests in turn ; except the chief priest. The *Bhog* is afterwards carried home by Bhandaris and is not distributed to others as *prasad*. All the doors are closed during *Balbhog* and *Bhog*.



Sri yantra or Sri Chakra. The design represents Shakti, the divine power which motivates the universe. In the centre is *bindu*, the mysterious matrix.

The temple doors again are opened at about six in the evening. Between 7 to 8 P.M., *arti* is offered in the same method as in the morning. At this time water is offered from a conch shell which is made of gold and has a right hand aperture. It is then sprinkled on the devotees. Prayers and bhajans are sung by the devotees.

Special worship is performed on special festive occasions. On *Puranmashi i.e.*, full moon day, *Mahasnan* is performed between 3-5 P.M. Twenty-one holy pots are used to pour water out of and the *panchamrita abhishek* is performed. At about

8 P.M. *Bhog* is offered. This consists of 9 moori and 9 mana* rice (163.63 kg) and 84 types of delicious food which is placed before the deity on the copper platform at the southside. Inside the heap of the cooked rice one *tola* (113.40 gms.) of gold is kept hidden. At this time a string is used to connect the food offerings with the south face of Pashupatinath. The food offered at this time is eaten by people belonging to the *Kushale caste*. They search for the gold in the food. One who gets it has to return the gold to the treasury of Lord Pashupatinath and he is paid only one *mohar* i.e., 50 paisa only.

On the *Puranmashi* i.e., the full moon day, the *Ekadasi* (eleventh day of both the dark and bright fortnights) and other days of festivals all the lamps which are fixed in an array around the temple are lighted.

Special worship takes place on Shivratri day. The worship starts from 9 O'clock in the night of this day. The first phase of worship lasts till 11 in the night when *Panchamrita Snan* is performed. Rudri is enchanted and along with elegant adornment *Balbhog* is offered. At this time *Bhog* is not offered. From 11 – 12.30 at night, the second phase of worship is performed and from 12.30 to 2 of the same night the third phase of worship is performed. From 2 to 3·30 in the morning of the second day of Shivratri, the fourth worship takes place. During the second, third and fourth phases of worships *Bhog* is not offered to the Lord. On the second day of Shivratri at 5 O'clock *tirtha jal* is sprinkled on the devotees. At 6 O'clock the doors of the temple are closed. All other daily worships are held as usual. The doors of the temple on Shivratri remain opened throughout the day and the night.

Chandan is not generally given to the devotees.

Special worships are also performed in the following months—

Baisakha (April-May)—Puja is done by offering *Damank* (*Artemisia sivesiana*) flowers (*Dhagswan* in Newari and *Dona* in Hindi). About 121 Brahmins offer water to Pashupati for the whole month for which they receive about 4 lbs of beaten rice.

Shravan-(July-Augst). This whole month is considered very sacred. On the day of *Janai Purnima* (*Raksha Bandhan*) which is the full moon day in late July or early August a length of yellow or saffron coloured thread is tied around his or her wrist by Brahmin, which ensures protection throughout the year.

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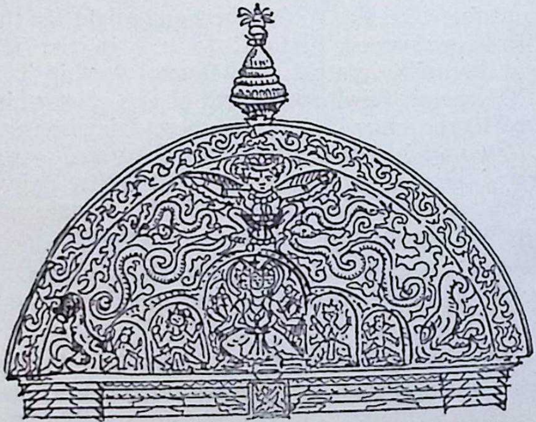
*Nepalese weights and measurements.

Kartika (October-November). On the 14th day of the bright fornight i.e., Shiva-Baikunth *Chaturdashi* when the *Chaturdashi* falls at night and Vishnu-Baikunth *Chaturdashi* when the *Chaturdashi* falls in the day time, worship is done and one thousand leaves of holy Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) are immersed in the water of the Bagmati.

Marga (November-December). On the 14th day of the dark moon fortnight in *Marga*, Pashupati is worshipped by adorning it with brocade.

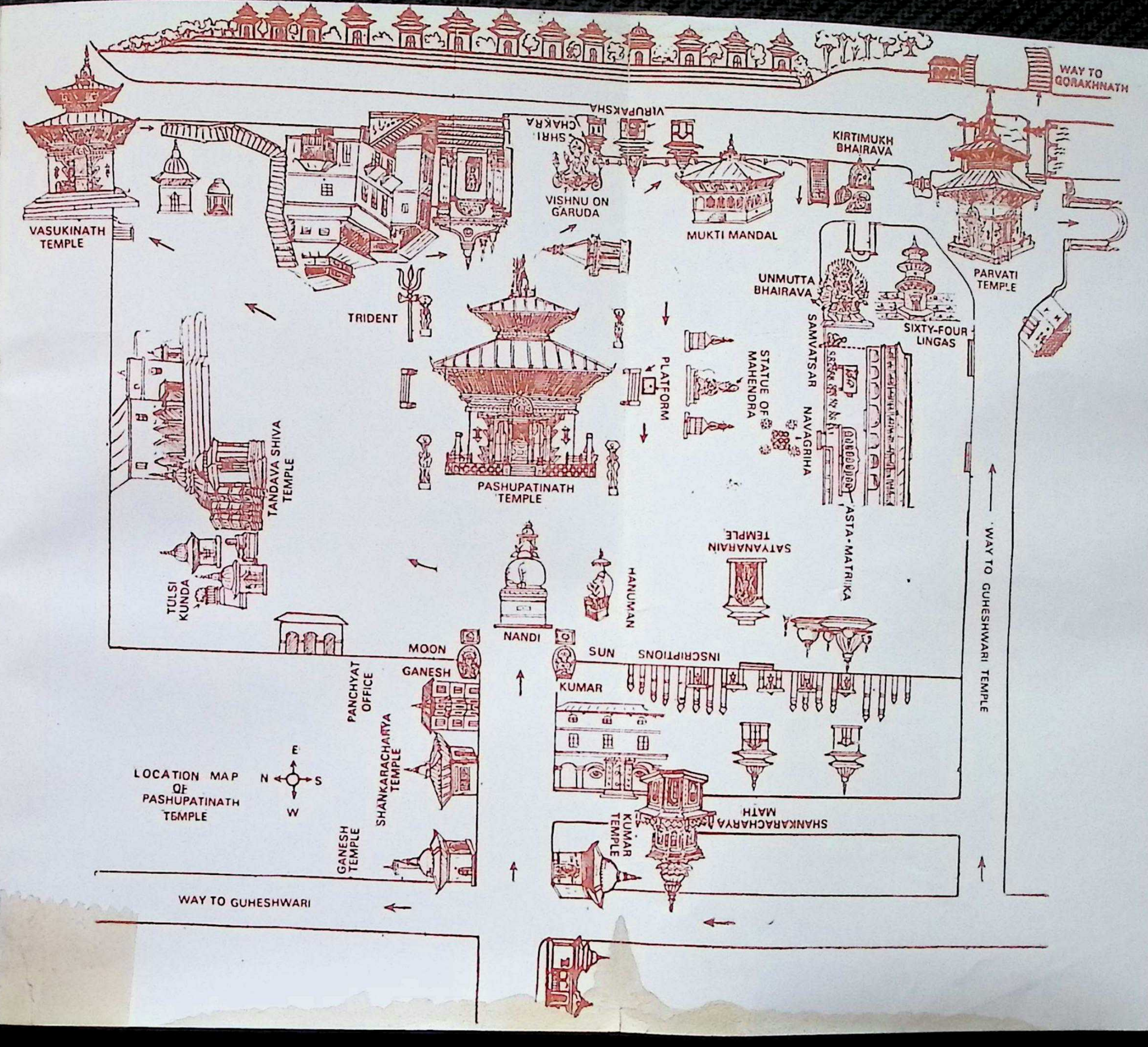
Paush (Dec/Jan.) -- Besides the daily routine of worship in the night worshipping goes on from 12 to 5 O'clock also. Bhog is offered in the form of *Khichadi* (*Khadagari*).

Phalgun (Feb./March) Mahashivaratri worship is performed.



A superb tympanum on south' gate of Pashupatinath.

"Hindus perform several religious acts in order to obtain the pardon of their sins in this world and ensure their happiness in the next".


LOCATION MAP OF PASHUPATINATH TEMPLE

E
N
S
W
WAY TO GORAKHNATH
VIRUPAKSHA
SHRI CHAKRA
VISHNU ON GARUDA
KIRTIMUKH BHAIRAVA
MUKTI MANDAL
VASUKINATH TEMPLE
PARVATI TEMPLE
UNMUTTA BHAIRAVA
SIXTY-FOUR LINGAS
TRIDENT
SAMVATSAR
PLATFORM
STATUE OF MAHENDRA
NAVAGRIHA
TANDAVA SHIVA TEMPLE
PASHUPATINATH TEMPLE
ASTA-MATRIKA
SATYANARAIN TEMPLE
TULSI KUNDA
HANUMAN
NANDI
MOON
SUN
INSCRIPTIONS
GANESH
KUMAR
PANCHYAT OFFICE
WAY TO GUHESHWARI TEMPLE
SHANKARACHARYA TEMPLE
SHANKARACHARYA MATH
KUMAR TEMPLE
GANESH TEMPLE
WAY TO GUHESHWARI

18

SOME GUIDELINES FOR A DARSHAN OF PASHUPATINATH

The following are some of the important guidelines that should be followed in the process of having a *darshan* of Pashupatinath. It is not only the holy scriptures that have prescribed these rules but Lord Shiva himself is believed to have enjoined upon the people to observe them. To break these rules is, according to the popular belief, tentamount to blasphemy. We think there is no harm if those who have some faith in divine power would make a point of the following them :

— Take a bath at Gaurighat. A dip at this point of the Bagmati river is believed to have a cleansing effect upon the body and the soul. The water is quite deep and clean.

— Visit Guheshwari Devi, Shiva's consort, as it is essential to worship the Goddess first who is the source of eternal energy.

— While going to Pashupatinath beware of monkeys, as they may snatch away even flowers and *Prasad*.

— While entering the temple of Pashupatinath look at the pinacle (*gajur*) as well as at the trident (*trishul*) and the drum (*damru*).

— It is considered inauspicious to see the tail of the metalled bull *Nandi* which is sitting reverentially before the temple.

— Always go from the left side for *darshan*, as it is considered to be sacrilagious in Nepal to take a round of a temple from the right side.

— Go on having a darshan of many small shrines that are lying by the side of the main temple, specially Tandava Shiva Temple.

— Go up the flight of steps on the northeast corner and have a *darshan* of Vasuki Nath. Circumbulate the temple.

— Come down the steps, have a *darshan* of the reclining Vishnu and then go down the long flights which lead to the Bagmati river.

— Offer some water of the river to Shri Mrigeshwar Mahadev and to Virupaksha (Kali).

— Bring some water in a container to offer to Lord Pashupatinath.

— Come back upstairs by the same flight of steps and have a *darshan* of Vishnu riding astride Garuda.

— Do not touch Brahmans between 9.45-12 A.M. while bringing the holy water of the Bagmati for *Snan* or the bathing of *lingam* (phallus).

— Turn towards the small shrine of Ganesh and have *darshan*.

— Take a round of *Mukti mandal*. Sit there for a few minutes facing towards the river.

— Have a *darshan* of Lord Krishna.

— Now come up the main circumambulatory path. While climbing it, touch all the four steps which represent *Dharm*, *Artha*, *Kam*, *Moksha*, each time touching the head with the hand that has touched the step.

— Mind that you do not tread on the copper platform while climbing up. This is meant for the offering of food to the deity on special festive occasions.

— Look at the tympanum having the anthropomorphic form of Pashupati.

— Bow down at Pashupati and make your wishes and pray for blessings for your prosperity.

— Never push anybody in the temple nor use any bad words to others.

— Go on saying "*On Nama Shivaya*" (I bow to Shiva) and offer garlands, flowers, *bel* leaves. fruits, incense sticks, etc. which can be brought from home or bought outside the temples.

— One may have special worship of *Panchamrit Abhishek*.

— Brahmans can also be requested to enchant '*Rudri*' for which you will pay them an amount you think reasonable. In Nepal Brahmans normally do not insist on a specific amount of money.

— No special time or special fees are fixed here for a special worship as in other holy pilgrim spots in India.

— Do not disturb the priests when they are conducting the *Panchamrit Abhishek* ceremony.

— Avoid offering sweets to Lord as Shiva is an ascetic. However it is not at all a taboo because in the worship of Pashupati, Haluwa and milk pudding are offered at the time of *Balbhog* and *Bhog* only prepared by Brahmans.

— Do not touch the holy treasures of the temple, while having *darshan*.

— If you buy a rosary of Rudraksha beads they should be offered to Lord Pashupatinath while worshipping in order to get them sanctified.

— Wait for *arti* and *tirtha* if you want. *Tirtha* is the holy water from different sacred places of the Hindu pilgrimages of Nepal and India. This holy water is sprinkled by the priest on the devotees for three times after *arti*. This is considered to be very sanctimonious to have a few drops of the *tirtha* sprinkled on your body.

— Circumambulate the main *sanctum* five times as it represents worshipping all the five faces of Lord Pashupati.

— While circumambulating go on having *darshan* of the images of *Pashupati lingam* on each side.

— Again return to the south side and have *darshan* of Kirtimukh Bhairava, which what they say is desired by Shiva himself.

— Then pass through the southern gate and circumambulate 64 lingas. It will hardly take 5 to 7 minutes. It is said that whoever will circumambulate these *lingas*, becomes free from the cycle of rebirth and death.

— Come back again and have *darshan* of Unmutta Bhairava. This is one of the fierce forms of Lord Shiva.

— Enter porch of *Yajnakunda*. Circumambulate once the *Astamatrikas* including Dakshin Kali. Touch their feet with your head.

— Come down and take a round of *Navagriha* on the ground.

— Bow at Nandi and worship Hanuman.

— Before coming out of the main entrance have a glance at the pinnacle, take five rounds while standing on the same spot and then come out.

— Don't fail to have *darshan* in the evening when the *Shringar* (adornment) ceremony is taking place.

IMPORTANT HINTS :

— Leather goods are prohibited in the temple. Flower sellers look after the pilgrims' shoes honestly for a small tip.

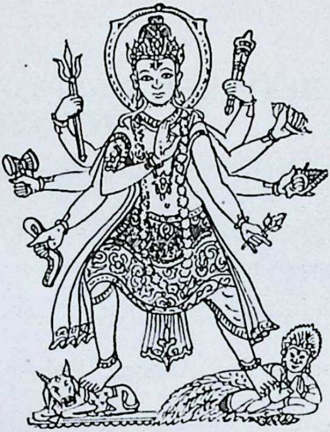
— Taking photographs of the temple is strictly prohibited from the front gate side (west). However, it is permitted from the back side (east).

— Non-Hindus are not allowed to enter the temple. However Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs are treated as Hindus and so they can have access to the main square inside the temple.

— Buy some pictures of Lord Pashupatinath to present to your near and dear ones. It is considered a pious act which has also sentimental value.

— *Panchmukhi lingam* and *Shaligram* made of black stone (only found in Nepal) are supposed to be auspicious to worship. Never give anybody the *Shaligram* (Black ammonite) you own from your ancesters, to part with it is to invite poverty and miseries. For good luck it is to be preserved at home.

— No need of too much bargaining and higgling though a little bargining is considered to be a normal affair.



Hari-Shankar, The part on the side of bull is of Shiva while on guruda is of Vishnu.

"Pilgrimages or *Tirth Yatra* are undertaken as act of faith and devotion for the accumulation of religious merit or to atone for sins."

19

AFFINITY BETWEEN PASHUPATINATH AND KEDARNATH

According to the epics the Himalayas are divided into five zones.

खण्डा पंच हिमालस्य कथिताः नेपाएकूमोचलो ।
केदारो डथ जलंधरो डथरुचिर काश्मरि सनोडन्तिम ॥

1. **Nepal**—with its boundary extended from Gorakhpur to Mansarovar).

2. **Kumayu**—extending Almora, Nainital, Garwal and Tibet.

3, **Kedrakhand**—Its boundary extending from Haridwar to Kailash.

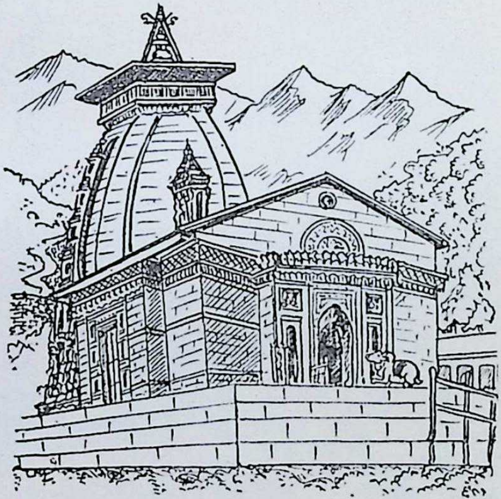
4. **Jullundhar**—Hill regions of Punjab.

5. **Kashmir**—includes zones between Punjab and Kashmir.

The zone from Kailash to Haridwar is called *Kedarkhand*, which is described according to the *Shrimad Bhagwad Gita* and 18 Puranas. Kedarnath is one of the *Jyotirlingas* (resplendent linga). Several saints and seers viz., Vashistha, Kashyaph, Atri, Gautam, Vishwamitra, Agastya, etc. practised meditation in this zone. According to the epic of Ramayana, Rama and Lakshman meditated in this Kedar Khand.

Similar legends exist between Kedarnath and Pashupatinath. According to the *Shiva Purana*, when Pandava killed their own kith and kin in the war of *Mahabharata* they were asked by the sage Narada to expiate their sins. They were advised to go to Kedar for worshipping Lord Shiva who was living there in anthropomorphic form. When the Pandava brothers reached Kedarnath, Lord Shiva started entering into the earth considering that they were guilty of the blood-shed and killing of their own relations. However, only the head region could enter the ground while Bhima caught hold of the back portion. Lord Shiva became pleased and gave *darshan* to the Pandava brothers and redeemed them from the sins of bloodshed and massacre. From that day the body of Lord Shiva is in the form of a rock in Kedarnath while the head region which entered the ground became known as Lord Pashupatinath.

Seeing the famous Temple of Kedarnath at an altitude of 11, 760 ft. one will be amazed to see some resemblance with the temple of Lord Pashupatinath. The pinnacle or *gajura* has definitely a very close resemblance to that of the Nepalese style of temple. The pinnacle consists of a *Kalash* with *Chintamani* jewel. Above the main pinnacle there is a triangle which has the perfectly Nepalese umbrella or *chathar* design.



Kedarnath Temple in the Himalaya of India dedicated to Lord Shiva.

The architecture of the temple is not of a pagoda style

19

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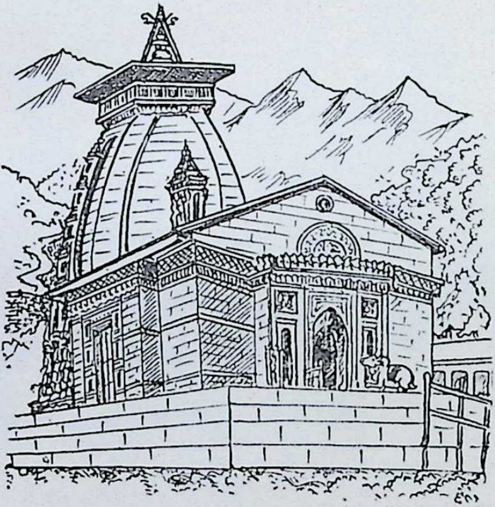


Kedarnath Temple in the Himalaya of India dedicated to Lord Shiva.

The architecture of the temple is not of a pagoda style but is a modification of *shikhar* style. On the top of the temple there are small balconies having some strut-like appearance. In front of the temple a Nandi is shown in a sitting pose. The bockdrop of the Himalayas gives it a very picturesque sight. According to the inscription, the temple was built in the year A.D. 1019 by King Bhoj. No clcar account is known about the Nepalese history of that period. It was only in 1097 a southern Rajput Nanya Deva from Simraon grasped the crown of Nepal.

Unfortunately we could not trace any further detail. When one of us (T.C.M.) visited the temple after trekking 16 kms he burst into tears when he had a real *darshan* of the deity according to the legend which states a great deal of similarity between Kedarnath of India and Pashupatinath of Nepal.

"He is the Creator, the Knower of the world, the self-sourced, the the Experiencer, the Author of Time with qualities, The all knowing (He) who is Lord of nature and the Individual Soul, Lord of *Gunas*, the course of Transmigration, Liberation, Continuance and Bondage".

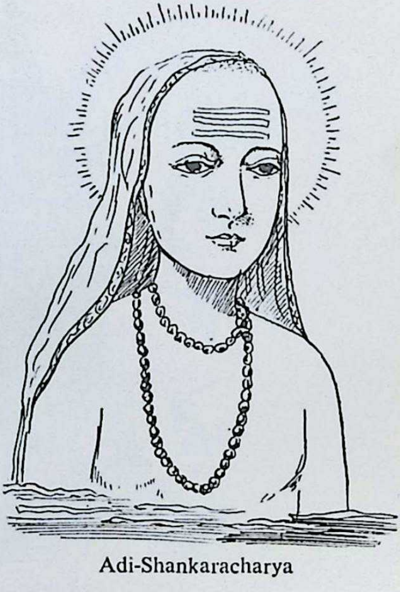
Veda

20

SHANKARACHARYA AND PRIESTS OF PASHUPATI

Shankara, Samskara or Shankaracharya (788-820) was a Vedantic philosopher. He was born in Kaladi, now Travancore (India). His father Shiva Guru was a Nambudri Brahman. His mother was named Aryamba. Both of them went to have a *darshan* of Chandramolishwar. After returning from the pilgrimage both of them saw Shiva in a dream at night. She claimed that she conceived by the grace of Lord Shiva. Shankar was brought up by his mother. One day as the story goes while the mother and the son were bathing in a river a crocodile caught hold of the foot of the boy. He requested his mother to give him permission to become a *Sannyasi* (*i.e.*, to lead a saintly life). The mother accepted his request ; the crocodile, it is said was a deity in disguise who released the boy immediately.

Shankra distinguished himself as a great debater. He had a famous discourse with a Pandit named Mandana Mishra of Varanasi. Mandana's wife acted as the judge. She declared Shankar victorious. However, she herself challenged him as *Sannyasi* she thought he would be unaware of

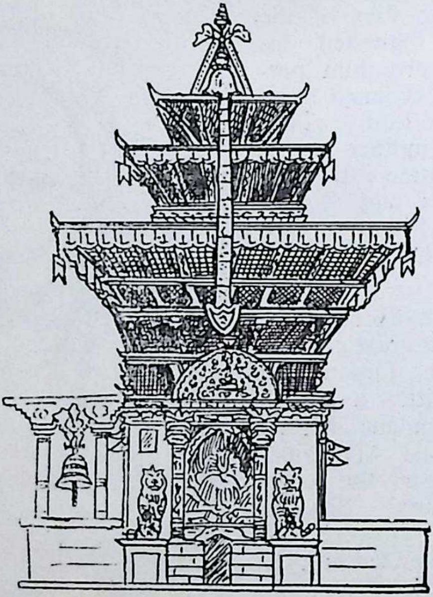


Adi-Shankaracharya

matters pertaining to sex. Shankara asked for a month's respite. He left his physical body, got into the body of a king named Amara and learnt about the philosophy of life.

Shankar established four great *maths* or monasteries. They are (1) Badrinath in the Himalayas (2) Puri in the east (3) Dwaraka in the west (4) Sringeri in Mysore in the south. Shankara died in Kedarnath at the age of 32.

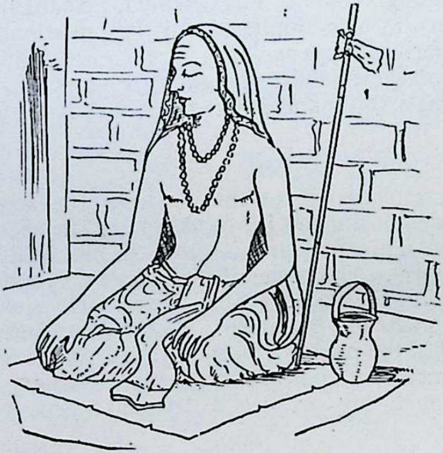
Shankaracharya discounted the omnipresence of the divinity. However, he was the Hindu commentator *par excellence*. His commentaries of the *Vedanta* are standard expositions. He was a critical minded genius. Shankaracharya



Temple of Vajreshwari Devi, which Shankaracharya visited in Nepal.

also propounded a metaphysical theory of extreme subtleties. He supported monism but also advocated idolatry and *linga* worship. He was considered as a champion of the Shaivite religion, especially Shakti teaching.

Shankaracharya was a staunch champion of Brahmin orthodoxy and was deadly against Buddhism. Shankaracharya's claim to the authenticity of his doctrines is based on the authority of the *Vedas*. Shankaracharya insisted on the oneness and unity of Brahma. He was monistic (*advaita*). The real is Brahma. Brahma is absolutely homogenous so that all differences and plurality are illusory. He considered Brahma as the ultimate principal, the final authority, the primary cause. As only Brahma is true all phenomenon and all nature, animate and inanimate is *Maya* or illusion caused by ignorance or *avidya*.



Shankaracharya in deep meditation

Shankaracharya was of the opinion that there are two kinds of knowledge which can be distinguished from each other. One is *aparavidya i.e.*, a lower form of knowledge which deals with the illusory world of our senses and reason and the other is *para-vidya* which is concerned with the only true reality that is to say to know Brahma and to strive for our identity with Brahma is the only way to liberation.

It is said that Shankaracharya came to Nepal for destruction of Buddhism. He had a high level discourse with a great follower of Buddhism named Amarsingh Banda, who put a curtain and invoked Neel Saraswati. The reply to the queries during discussion was given by Neel Saraswati who was invoked and represented in the form of a holy pot or *Kalash*. Shankaracharya kept always pondering and was lost in deep thought. At this time the beautiful and charming daughter of Amarsingh Banda, attracted Shankaracharya, pointed out to him after removing the curtain. Later Shankaracharya, tore open the curtain and pushed the *Kalash* away also. Then there was no sound coming out of the *Kalash*. Thus Amarsingh Banda was defeated. Shankaracharya was then engaged in worshipping. Lord Pashupatinath every day with an offering *Panchamrita i.e., ghiu*, curd, milk, honey and sugar. Later he established a *guthi* (religious trust) and made it a rule that a Brahman from the South is to worship Lord Pashupati.

Shankaracharya also went to have the *darshan* of Vajra Yogini which is situated in Sankhu*. (The Sankhu village is in Kathmandu valley and is about 20 km. away from Kathmandu proper). The name of the village was earlier Shankarpur situated at the Bank of Shali River. He saw everywhere Buddhists practising Buddhism. Later Shankaracharya made a plan to kill the priest of Vajrayogini. At the same time, a celestial oracle was heard from the idol of Vajrayogini. 'You can not touch my priest and I would accept worship only from him'.

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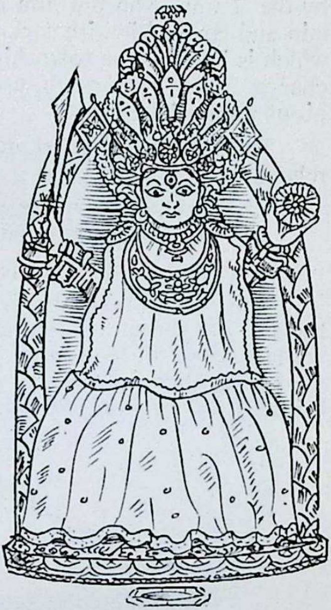
*Vajra Yogini is about 2 km. from Sankhu.

Because of this oracle, Shankaracharya could not fulfil his desire of worshipping the goddess. Later it is said that Shankaracharya left the sword at the feet of the goddess and prayed to her in the name of Khadgayogini. He left worshipping and offering *Bali puja* (sacrifice worship) to the priest incharge of goddess and went to the north side. At Vajrayogini in front of the main images no sacrifice is to be made. Sacrifice is only made in front of a Bhairava and Ganesh temple at a site near the flight of stairs. The Bhairava of that place is known as *Bajra Bir Mahankal.*

There is another very interesting story about Vajra Yogini (the goddess of magic). It is said that Shankaracharya became very thirsty here. At this spot a very beautiful young girl with a pot of water appeared. Shankaracharya asked her for water. She said 'water is very near and you can go there and have it'. Shankaracharya replied, I have no *shakti* or energy to go there. The young girl laughed and said that from when you have started believing in *Shakti*. She was the goddess Vajra Yogini. Shankaracharya prayed to her immediately by composing a prayer song in which he said "Oh Devi ! a son can be bad but nowhere on earth can a bad mother be found."



Vajrayogini goddess who inspired Shankararacharya to worship Shakti.

It is said that later Shankaracharya reached the bank of the Brahmaputra river and stayed there. In the night the Yogini goddess appeared in a dream before the chief Lama and told him that the destructor of Buddhism had reached there. Lama had a scholarly discussion with Shankaracharya.

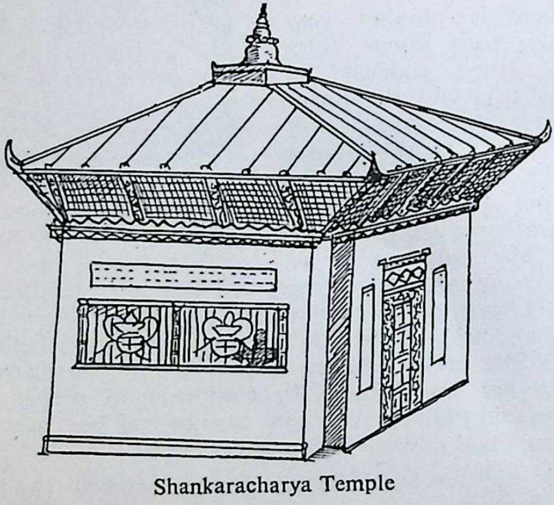
It is further said that Shankaracharya was beaten in the debate by the Lama, who put him in a ditch on the side of a mountain and covered it with rock. This place is called *Bajra killa* which is in Khasa, a township in Tibet (China). Shankaracharya died in Kedarnath, northwest of Himalayas where a pious memorial exists.

There are two important places in the Pashupatinath area related to Shankaracharya :

1. Shankaracharya temple.
2. Shankaracharya math.

Shankaracharya Temple :

This temple is on the left side of the main lane which leads to the shrine of Pashupatinath. This temple has big white statues. In the centre, Shankaracharya is seen seated while the other four are his pupils. The temple is made of bricks. It is one-storeyed and is gilded. Its roof corners terminate in faces of semi-divine beings. The pinnacle is simple. This temple has beautiful very old sculptures of deities Durga, Vishnu, Ganesh and Saraswati. The stone carvings are beautiful examples of superb craftmanship of Nepal. This



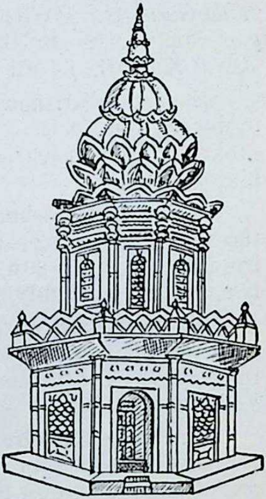
Shankaracharya Temple

temple was built at the time of Kanchi Jagat Guru Shankaracharya when he visited Nepal.

Shankaracharya or Janakeshwari Math :

While going to Pashupatinath area for the Shankaracharya temple, turn right on the first cross road. Here on the right hand side a white temple can be secn. This is the religious residence of Adi Shankaracharya where he stayed during his visit to Nepal. In this place the foot prints and an idol of Adi Shankaracharya are kept well preserved.

The temple architecture shows the Mughal impact. The joint story is octogonal and above it there are typical balconies with inverted arch-shaped and pointed projections. This type of architecture is not very common in Nepal. On the east side there is the main gate. The pinnacle is very simple. In the vicinity of the temple there are *lingas* on all sides. In front of the temple there is a *havana kunda*.



Shankaracharya Math

PRIESTS OF PASHUPATI

There are 4 priests of Pashupati, who are selected specially from the Brahmans of Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra (India). The selection is made on the basis of scholarship. These priests can not become Nepali nationals. The post of a priest is not hereditary, *i.e.*, no member of their own family can become a priest of Pashupati on the next occasion.

The following are the priests of Pashupati at present.

1. Shri Padmanabham Shastri (Adiga)—Chief Priest.
2. Shri Ram Krishna Shastri.
3. Shri Anant Krishna Shastri (Somyaji).

4. Shri Subramanya Joshi.
5. Shri Ram Chandra Bhatt—Priest of Vasuki Narain.

Shri Padma Nabham Shastri, the chief priest of Pashupati has been serving the Lord for the last 26 years. He hails from Uddupi (Karnatak). He was appointed assistant priest in 1954 and later on in 1965 appointed chief priest. The chief priest always worships the south side of the Pashupati. He is expert in the *Rig Veda*, religious scriptures and astrology. He is about 53 years old and he is *Rig Veda Kovid.*

It is said that the chief priest or *Mool Bhat* of Pashupati, *Bada Guruji* (royal chief priest) and *Mahant* of Gorkhanath can apply *tika* on the forehead of the King. Buddhist Royal Kumari of Kathmandu also offer *tika* to the King.

Shri Ram Krishna Bhatta has been serving the Lord as senior assistant priest for the last 16 years. He hails from Gokarna, (North Karnataka) India. He is also known for his erudition.

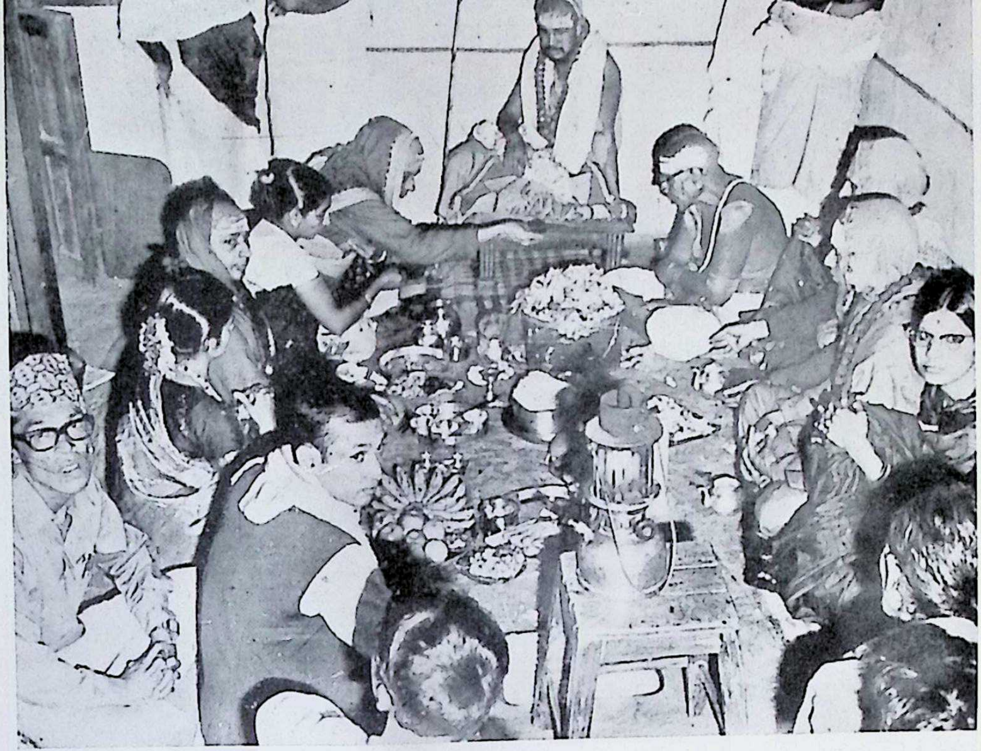
Shri Anant Krishna (Somyaji) has been worshipping in the temple as assistant priest for the last 13 years. He hails from Kundapur (South Karnataka). As the name denotes he is really *somya* (kind) and is a great scholar.

Shri Subramanya Joshi is also an assistant priest. He hails from Gokarna (North Karnataka) and has been attending the deity for the last 12 years. He is also proficient in Vedic scriptures.

Shri Ram Chandra Bhatta is the priest of Vasuki Narain. He hails from Uddupi, South Karnataka. He has been only recently appointed on this post.

The selection of the priest is made by the Chief priest, Padma Nabhamji and *Bada Guruji*. Shri Shastri sends the message for the potential candidate who is interviewed by *Bada Guruji* (**Pt. Junanath Sharma** at present). Later if the candidate is selected he is to have the *darshan* of the King after presenting a coconut fruit. The selection is final when the King approves of the appointment. The worship of the temple is done according to the Vedic system. The selection of the priest is made when they are initiated by *Pashupatastra mantra*. The priest of Vasuki Narain can not have entrance

Jagatguru Shankaracharya of Kanchikoti with Chief Priest and Priests of Pashupatinath.



Jagatguru Shankaracharya performing worship with other Priests in Pashupati.

to the temple of Pashupatinath and worship him. The dress, priest has to wear during worship is *Dusala*, *Labeda*, *Kamarpeti* and *Shrimala*. The *rudraksha mala* is called *Shrimala* which is a rosary made of *Eleocarpus*. Without putting it on, a priest can not enter the main sanctum of Pashupati. When the priest goes into the main sanctum he has to wash his feet with the holy water of the Bagmati then the *Bhandaris* (store keeper) will give him *Shrimala* which the priest puts round his head, then he is qualified to enter the main sanctum.

Another qualification for the priest for Pashupati is that he should be a *sansari*, *i.e*,, he must lead a family life. However, the Shankaracharya of other places *i.e.*, Badri, Dwarika, Puri, Kanchi and Shingri cannot marry.

Bhandari (Store-Keeper) is a hereditary post. They are at present four in number ; they are 1. Sanoman, 2. Purshottam, 3. Krishana and 4. Baman lal. Each serves the Lord only for a month and he is substituted by another on the second day of *Purnima*, *i.e.*, the full moon day of the bright fortnight. Bhandaris can neither worship nor touch the deity. Their main job is to assist the priests. *Bhandaris* are Shrestha Newars. Bhandaris assist in all activities such as in the job of cleaning and so on in the main sanctum.

The Priests and Bhandaris do not get their salary in cash, however, they are given paddy instead of cash money. The quantity of the paddy is fixed according to their seniority and job.

Regarding the distribution of the money offered to the deity, it is divided into three parts. One part is shared by Bhandaris while the remaining two parts are divided among the five priests. The share of the chief priest is double of what the assistant priest gets. However, gold, silver and other precious items are the property of the Lord himself and is stored in the balconies. Priests and the management staff, etc. are all under the direct command of the King.

"The non-initiated may say that the uneducated mass listen to the instructions or preachings only when the discourses are intermingled with some extravagant stories and some absurd fables or some fictions."

21

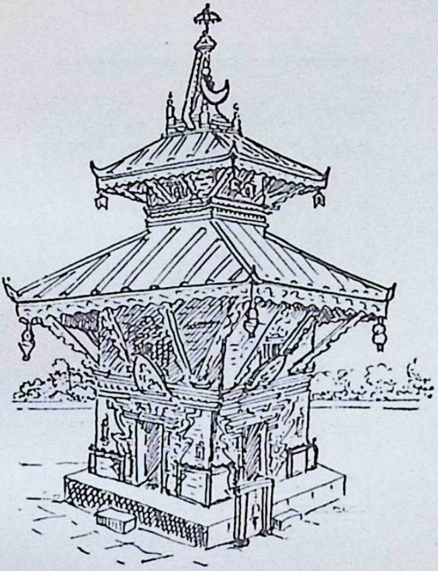
TEMPLES IN DEOPATAN

There are several famous and holy temples in Deopatan and adjacent areas. For the sake of convenience, first the temples near Pashapatinath are described, followed by temples away from Pashupatinath.

1. Bachaleshwari or Parvati Temple
2. Narayan Temple
3. Rajrajeshwari temple
4. Shiva Temple
5. Shiva-Temple complex
6. Ram Temple
7. Ram-Janaki Temple
8. Lakshmi-Narain Temple
9. Gauri ghat temple
10. Kiranteshwar Temple
11. Guheshwari Temple
12. Jaya Bagheshwari Temple
13. Dakshin-murti Temple.

BACHALESHWARI OR PARVATI TEMPLE.

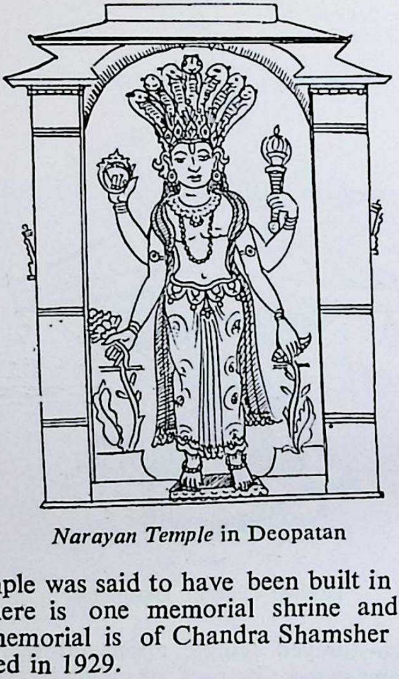
This is a pagoda-style temple at the bank of the Bagmati river. The temple is unique in itself. There is a commonly accepted notion that till the days of King Shivadeva, a human sacrifice used to be offered here on the day of Shivratri festival.



Parvati Temple, Deopatan.

It is a two-storeyed temple about 6·0 m, high and is made of brick and wood ; its roofs are gilded. The roofs have 12 ribs and a round of *kinkinmala* (metal border) hangs down from the roofs. Four *kalashas* (water pots) are suspended from the lower roof, and from the upper roof, four flags are suspended. Small bells hang from the beams of both the roofs. The pinnacle is very big with a triangle over it, and a canopy type umbrella on the top. A characteristic feature is a big metallic crescent-shaped moon on the western side of the pinnacle. The temple stands on a very smally plinth level. There are four doors with *toranas* (tympanums). In front of the main temple figures of small lions are depicted while there are oil lamp raillings on all sides. Struts depict erotic themes. There is no image inside the temple only a small rounded base or *pitha* is shown.

NARAYAN TEMPLE



Narayan Temple in Deopatan

This temple was said to have been built in a single night. Beside it, there is one memorial shrine and some lingas. The highest memorial is of Chandra Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana who died in 1929.

RAJ RAJESHWARI OR SHRI RAJ RAJESWARI TEMPLE

The *Himvat Khanda* describes this temple as boon-giving. The temple is situated towards the south side of the Pashupati temple going ahead of the public funeral ghat or burning place. The temple is dedicated to the goddesses and there is a very important Shiva Temple in the courtyard. The temple was probably renovated at the time of Jang Bahadur. For entrance in the courtyard are two gates, one facing east and the other north. The gate facing east is the main gate, however, the northern gate is commonly used. The main gate is in the form of an arch with two lions with Ganesh and Kumar on the sides.

The Rajeshwari temple is one storeyed with metallic roofs. It is about 6·0m. in height and is rectangular in shape. It has no plinth. There are 10 ribs on the roof with ends terminationg in semi-gods. Four ribs are carved and have flying metallic pheasants perched on them. The roof has got three pinnacles with usual design structure but each with three arches having floral designs and canopies.

The struts are small and do not look so prominent. Six struts face towards the north and six-struts towards the west. Only four struts face towards the east while four struts are towards the south. The struts facing east and south are carved with erotic poses on them. There are no erotic poses on the struts facing towards the west and the north. On the struts facing towards the west, musicians are shown in bold relief.

The main gate for the sanctum santorum consisting false doors is very low. The main temple is guarded by small lions. The tympanum is superb and beautifully sculptured. On the north side there are two gods and two mirrors on both sides of the main gate of the sanctum.

The main sanctum has got beautiful images of Navdurga ; which are named as follows : 1. Shailputri 2. Brahmacharini 3. Chandraganta 4. Koshmata 5. Skand mata 6. Katyayini 7. Kalratri 8. Mahagauri 9. Devduti.

Each goddess is depicted as four-handed, placed in a standing pose and gorgeously dressed. The *kirit* or crown of each goddess is beautiful with a leaf-shaped structure. The necklace is made of skulls. On one side of the goddess, Ganesh is also shown. On the full moon day of the bright fortnight *Panchbali bhog* (sacrifice of five types of animals) is offered to the goddess.

SHIVA TEMPLE

There is a very big Shiva temple in front of the Rajeshwari temple. It is more than 9·0m in height. It stands on three tiers of plinths and looks more prominent than the

Rajeshwari temple. The main gate is towards the west in front of the Rajeshwari temple. The structure above the cornice level is circular. Later there are 4 big niches of rectangular temples and on the sides are 4 small temple niches. Each has got a pinnacle. The main central structure of the temple has got 4 snakes with their heads downwards and tails upwards. The pinnacle is mounted on an inverted bell shaped structure made of brick and mortar. The pinnacle is somewhat different from the typical pinnacle. On the top there is a small umbrella. Before the main gate a big bell on stone pillars is mounted. There are four big windows also on the sides of the four doors leading to the sanctum inside. The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva. Inside the courtyard of the Rajeshwari and Shiva temple there are beautiful stone sculptures of Kamadeva, Garuda, Umamaheshwara, etc. In front of the north gate there is a beautiful Buddhist sculpture which now remains half buried. (Described in detail in Chapter 23).

SHIVA TEMPLE COMPLEX

While going from the small arched entrance leading from the street near the public funeral ghats there is a complex of temples :

I. Bhasmeshwar which consists of 3 small temples
II. Shleshkanteshwar
III. Praneshwar
IV. Amar Kanteshwar

All the temples are dedicated to Lord Shiva and have got Shiva linga. Nothing is very special about these temples. In the courtyard of Amar Kanteshwar Shiva temple there is the masterpiece of Umamaheshwar in relief.

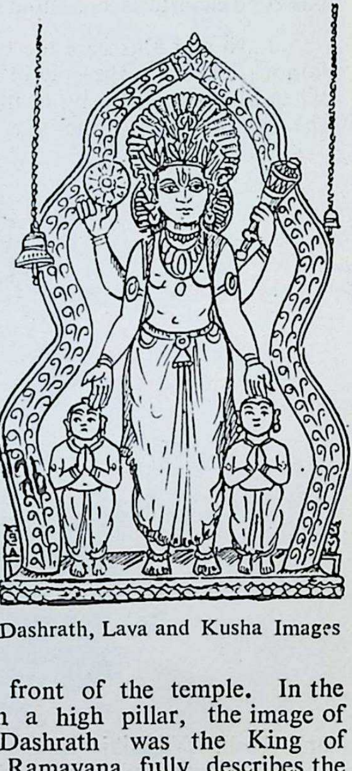
RAMA TEMPLE

Just across the bridge which leads to the Gorakhnath temple on turning to the right there is a small path leading to a complex of three Vaishnavite temples. They are as follows :

1. Rama temple
2. Rama-Janaki temple
3. Lakshmi Narain temple

RAMA TEMPLE

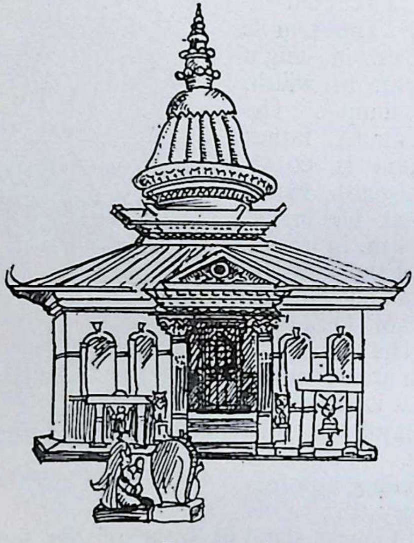
The first temple just near the bridge is Ram temple. It is dedicated to the father of Ram, King Dashrath together with Lava and Kusha, grandsons of Dashrath. The temple is very simple and is recent. It is one-roofed. The temple architecture has got an impact of Mughal architecture and not much can be said about its temple architecture in its analogy with the Nepalese pagoda style. It has a dome shaped pinnacle which looks very simple because it is not made of copper. Round the temple is a circumambulatory path. The temple is about 9-12 m. in height and about 6-8 m. in width. The idols are unique. The idol is of Dashrath, father of Rama. Rama is considered as the seventh incarnation of Vishnu. The image is the about 2-4 m. in height. On both side of the idol of Dashrath, Lava and Kusha, the grandsons of Dashrath are shown. The idols of Lava and Kush are about ·60 m. each. What is most surprising is, that all the idols stand in a *yoni*. The outlet of *yoni* is pointing towards the north. Very big idols of Garuda and Ganesh stand in front of the temple. In the centre of Garuda and Ganesh on a high pillar, the image of Hanuman is erected. Lord Dashrath was the King of Ayodhya (India). The epic of Ramayana fully describes the story of Dashrath, Rama and Lava-Kush. It is described that Rama was exiled to live in the forest for 14 years. He went to the forest just to obey the orders of his father and to



Dashrath, Lava and Kusha Images

uphold the religion that was in decadence. He was accompanied by his brother, Lakshman and his wife Sita. Rama has been described as the most dutiful son of Dashrath. It is said that Dashrath was cursed by the blind parents of Shravan Kumar whom he shot dead at a well, mistaking him for a deer. Dashrath died when his eldest son Rama was in exile. Rama has been described as a model of morality.

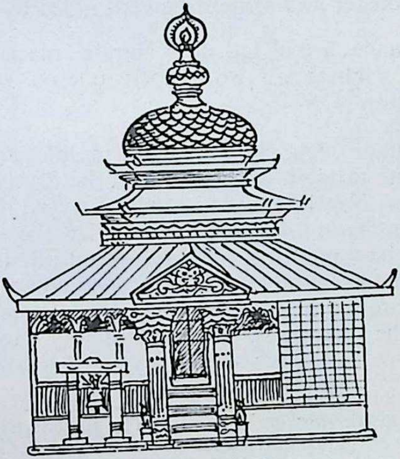
Lava and Kush are the two sons of Lord Rama. There is a famous legend in the epic of Ramayana. It is described that when Sita was exiled by Rama after the conquest of Lanka she was pregnant. She was blessed with twins named Lava and Kush. Valmiki brought them up with great care and gave them good education. When Rama sent out a horse round the world as a part of the religious rite of *Ashavmedha yajna* (horse sacrifice), it was held up near the hermitage of the saint by Lava and Kush. As they could not be beaten by Rama's army, he himself had to come forward to fight with



Ram Mandir

them. Rama finally recognised Lava and Kusha who were brought back amidst rejoicings to Ayodhya.

Another legend says that Sita was blessed only with Lava, however Valmiki created another from *Kusha* (*Eragrostis cynosuroides*) grass on the assumption that as a result by his mistake Lava was snatched away by wild animals in the forest but actually the fact was that Sita had taken the baby to show him a monkey without the knowledge of Valmiki. When Valmiki saw the cradle empty he presumed that the boy was taken away by some wild animals. Valmlki thought that Sita would be shocked and would blame the sage for not keeping an eye on the boy carefully. Therefore, he created an exactly similar son from *Kusha* grass. When Sita returned with her child to the hermitage she was surprised to see another boy in the cradle. Valmiki explained to her everything and asked her to bring up both the children as her own. The sage named the boy *Kusha*. This traditional story is also common with the Chepangs, a tribe of Nepal, which is almost on the verge of extinction.



Rama Janaki Temple in Deopatan

RAMA-JANAKI TEMPLE

It is also a temple of Vaishnavite faith. It is dome-shaped. The door is towards the west side. There are three doors in the temple. While there is no gate on the east. On the sides of the gates *Kirtimukha* and *Nagkanya* are most prominent. The idols in the temples are of Rama, Sita, Lakshman, Bharat. Shatrughna, and Hanuman. The images are established on three steps high. In the centre there is a big mirror.

The temple is one roofed. The pinnacle is typically characterised by lotus, *kalash* (holy pot) and jewal. Covering the pinnacle is an arch.

LAKSHMI NARAIN TEMPLE

This temple is at the extreme end of the temple complex. The architecture is almost the same as that of Rama-Janaki Mandir. The main gate is towards the west. There is a circumambulatory path. Doors are three while there is no door on the east side. The door has got an arch of *Kirtimukh* with sea-monster and serpent bands headed by a *Nagkanya*.

The images are of Lakshmi Narain placed on a plinth of three steps. There are two big bells one on each side of the main entrance.

The images, which are made of marble, are very beautiful and are quite modern ones. Between the Rama-Janaki Temple and Lakshmi Narain temple in the courtyard there is a tree of *Parijata* (*Nyctanthes arbotrestis*)* Under the shade of the tree on a round base-platform there is a beautiful image of Lord Vishnu with the canopy of seven-headed cobra. On the two sides there are stone sculptures depicting typical *aina* (mirror). On one of the sculptures, the symbol of knowledge or the

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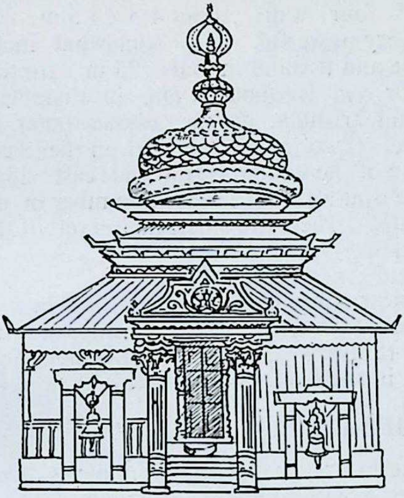
*Parijata tree is a favourite of Lord Krishna. It is called *Rudilo* in Nepalese and *Harsinghar* in Hindi. The English name for it is Coral Jasmine. It is a kind of cultivated plant found in Guheshwari and in Pashupatinath, especially at 1300 m altitude. It is one of the sacred plants having a medicinal value.

personification of Saraswati, the goddess of learning, is depicted.



Lakshmi Narain Temple

GAURI GHAT (PLATFORM) TEMPLE

This is a place from where the Bagmati flows from the cut-out hillocks. The place is very famous as it is believed that Gauri or Parvati used to take a bath here. On the bank of Gauri Ghat there is a big image of Hanuman. Hindu devotee take a bath in the Bagmati at Gauri Ghat. It is situated on the way to the Guheshwari temple. In the holy water of the Bagmati is an idol of Parwati which is specially worshipped by the devotees.

KIRANTESHWAR MAHADEV

This temple of Kiranteshwar Mahadev or Lord Shiva is located on the northern slope of Pashupati hillocks which can be approached through a passage from Gauri Ghat across bridge near the Guheshwari Temple. The courtyard and the adjacent area of the temple are in a peaceful and calm atmosphere. The temple is about 1000 years old. The temple is in such a ruined condition that it is no more than an enclosure of four walls about 4·5×4·5 m. The *lingam* is regarded as very powerful. It is somewhat inclined towards the north side and it stands about ·75 m. from its pedestal. The *Jalhari* or *yoni* is about 1·5m. in diameter. Beside the *lingam*, a small trishula, *damru*, *pharsa* (axe) is erected on the north side. Two bulls are placed on the west side. The main entrance of the temple is on the east side. Beside the *lingam* on the south side there are a number of bells and three Nandis or bulls. There are small niches on all the four sides of the temple.

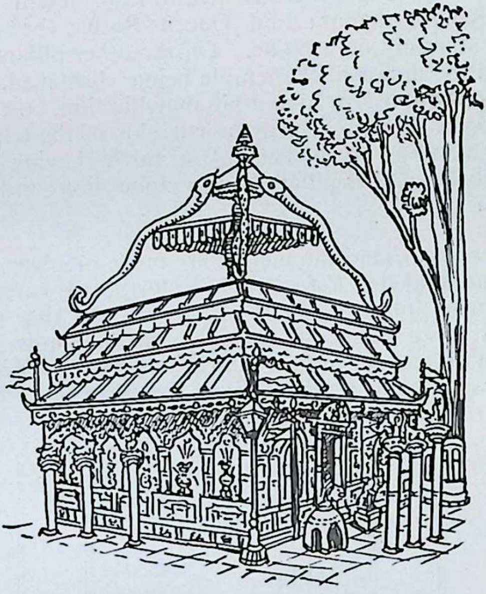
Kirant incarnation of Lord Shiva has been described in the Hindu epic, Mahabharata. According to it, Arjuna got *Pashupatastra* (Shiva weapon) from Mahadev or Shiva when he was living in the Kirant form here.

GUHESHWARI TEMPLE

The Guheshwari (or Guhekali) temple is located about a kilometre east of the Pashupatinath temple and stands at the left bank of the river Bagmati. It also lies on the same hillock known as Gauri Shankar. This temple-pavilion is dedicated to Lord Shiva's consort, Sati and has an open arched roof of tubular metal work. Towards the top, there are four gilded snakes which support the crowning portion of the roof. This temple is designed after the *Tantra-yantra*, the geometric triangle signifying the female principle of procreation. Around the temple there is a well-paved stone courtyard surrounded by hospices and resting places. This temple differs in many ways from the pagoda style temples of Nepal.

A few steps down lead to the main sanctum of the temple. At the centre of the enclosure there is an oval-shaped, slightly elevated, cupola-like gold platform which is symbolic of a female organ. In the middle of this platform there is an opening always filled to the brim with water which is kept covered with a silver *Kalash* (holy water pot) as its lid.

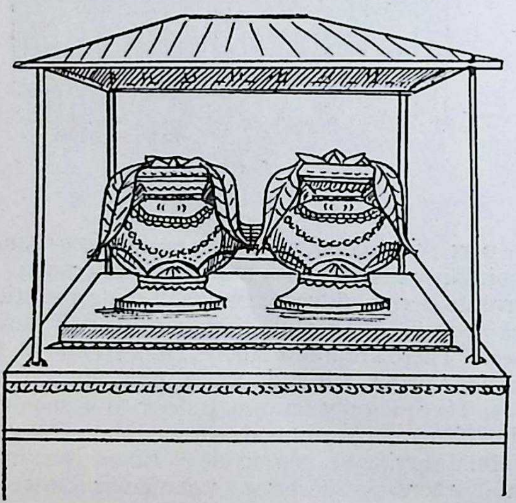
The depth of the water-filled hole is believed to be unfathomable. This spot represents Goddess Sati or Guhekali and is highly venerated by Hindus. It is said that the level of water in this sacred spot always remains constant. Devotees worship this part with country-made beer (*Jand*) and eggs. The worshipping is not done with much paraphernalia. Devotees offer vermillion rice, flowers, sweets and incense sticks to the goddess. Around the temple there are idols of several other goddesses. There are a few small cubicles above the temple, where various priests sit and recite holy lines from Hindu scriptures. There is only one small door to it and just in front of it below four or five steps down the stairs there is a spot where animal sacrifice is also made. Above the main part of the temple there is a large rectangular canopy made of silver.



Guheshwari Devi Temple

Around the middle of the paved courtyard there is a row of rest houses where marriages or other functions can be celebrated in any season. These rest houses have beautiful wood carvings. On the western side in front of the main entrance of the temple there is a beautiful metallic statue of the Late King Mahendra and Queen Ratna (present Queen Mother), standing on a pillar. On the other pillars there are a lion and the donor of the temple being displayed. Beside it on a pillar about 1·5 m high a big metallic lion, the vehicle of the goddess is shown. On the north side of the temple there is a pillar standing on the back of a turtle having two lions with a sword. Other pillars have a stone lion and a trident (*trishula*).

The walls around the temple are made of silver and some portions are gilded. *Kalash* (holy water pot) is carved on the metal in many places. There is a railing also round the shrine. It has a series of metallic small lamps which are filled with oil and are lighted during festive occasions. The main entrance to the temple is from the north side which is on



Guheshwari Kalasha, representing male and female principles

the main road near the river. The entrance door is surrounded by depictions of human skulls. This is symbolical and it is believed that only holy persons can go inside it. On both the sides of the gate, two pictures are carved to show that this world is just like an ocean and human beings are all sitting in boats. Those who do good deeds in life will succeed in crossing the ocean of miseries and those who do not will get drowned. Thus these depictions have a deep philosophical import.

On the back of the main door towards the temple there are images carved of nine goddesses named Brahmayani, Maheshwari, Kumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrayani, Chamunda, Mahalakshmi and Guheshwari.

This temple is worshipped by the Hindus and also by Buddhists* alike. The structural plan and the mysterious way of taking offerings down into a hole covered with a *Kalash* (holy water pot), instead of an image of Sati or Parvati point out that this temple is of Tantrayana. However, the location of the spot suggests that it is a temple of Goddess Parvati or Sati, the consort of Lord Shiva, one of Hindu Trinity.

There is a popular legend, a little modified by the one described else where. Lord Shiva was married to Sati before being married to Parvati (another birth of Sati). Daksha, father of Sati, performed a sacrificial rite to which he did not invite Lord Shiva and Sati. Being mad with anger and insult Sati killed herself by jumping into the sacrificial altar. Lord Shiva in a peroxysm of anger killed his father-in-law by assuming the form of Bhairav, a dreadful aspect of Shiva. Grieved at the death of Sati, Lord Shiva started wandering about with her body on his shoulders. However, the body got decomposed and soon began to disintegrate. The parts of the body fell at various spots piece by piece. And the place where a part of her body fell off became hallowed. It is believed that the secret organ of Sati fell at this very spot where the temple of Guheswari (*Guhe*=Vagina) now stands. Other parts of her body fell in various places of Nepal and of India.

One thing which is very peculiar about this temple is that the priest who helps in the worshipping by taking off the holy *Kalash* and putting it back on its place is always from a scheduled caste and is not a very learned Sanskrit scholar. He does not do the worshipping but simply helps in it. Of course there is an 'achaju' who performs the daily routined *puja* (worship). It is believed that inside this sanctuary there is no room for caste discrimination. Though this temple is not open to Non-Hindus, the site of this temple is very pictursque and should not be missed by a visitor who has some spare time. The road further ahead of Pashupatinath temple ends here. Standing by the road one can see Bodhnath stupa just in front of the temple at a little distance across the river Bagmati. Towards the east one can see Tribhuvan airport, on a more elevated part and some of the beautiful peaks of the Himalayas.

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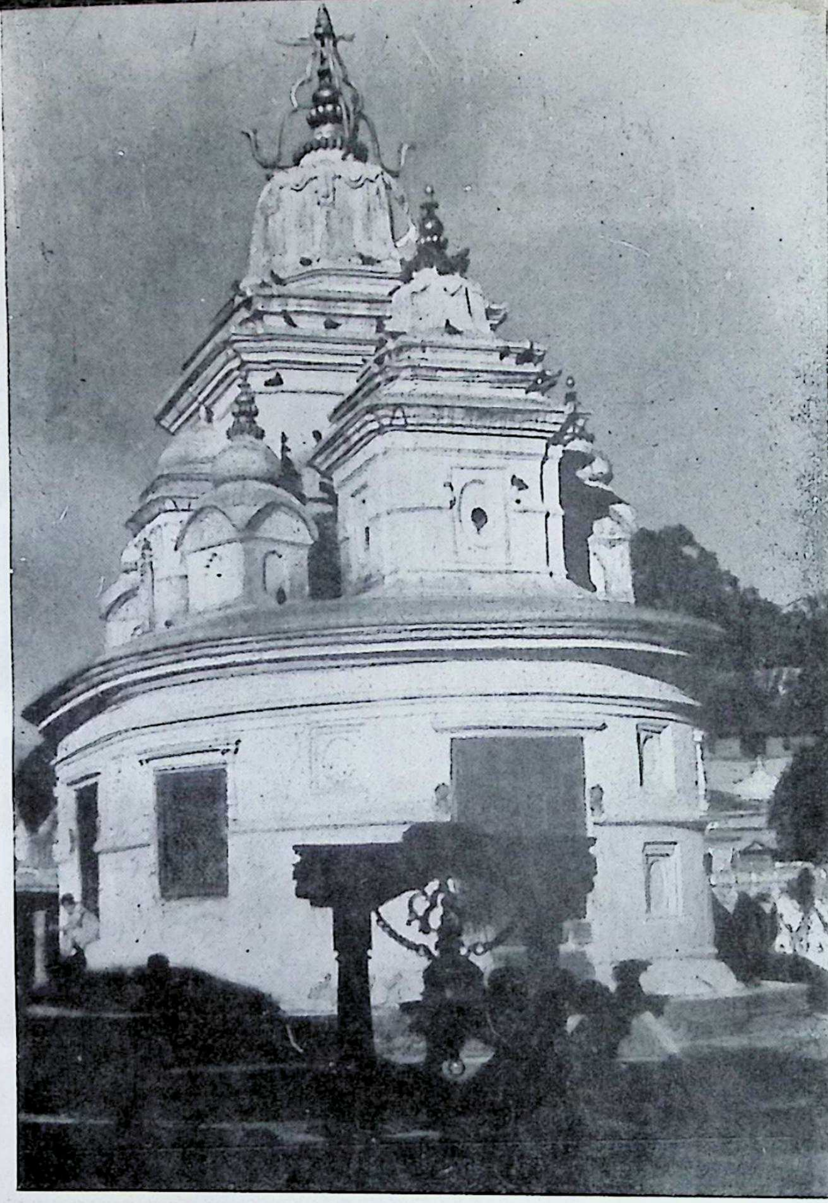
*Buddhists regard it as Yogini.

According to a story, a Brahmin scholar came from Bihar (adjoining Nepal during the regime of Pratap Malla). King Pratap Malla accepted him as his preceptor. One day the Brahmin told the King that there was a hidden goddess on the north of the forest near Paspupatinath (Deopatan). The King ordered the spot to be excavated and the image of goddess Guneshwari (secret deity) was discovered. The King got a temple constructed. There is an inscription in the temple which says that Pratap Malla had erected the temple and the pillar in front of the temple has also been duly consecrated.

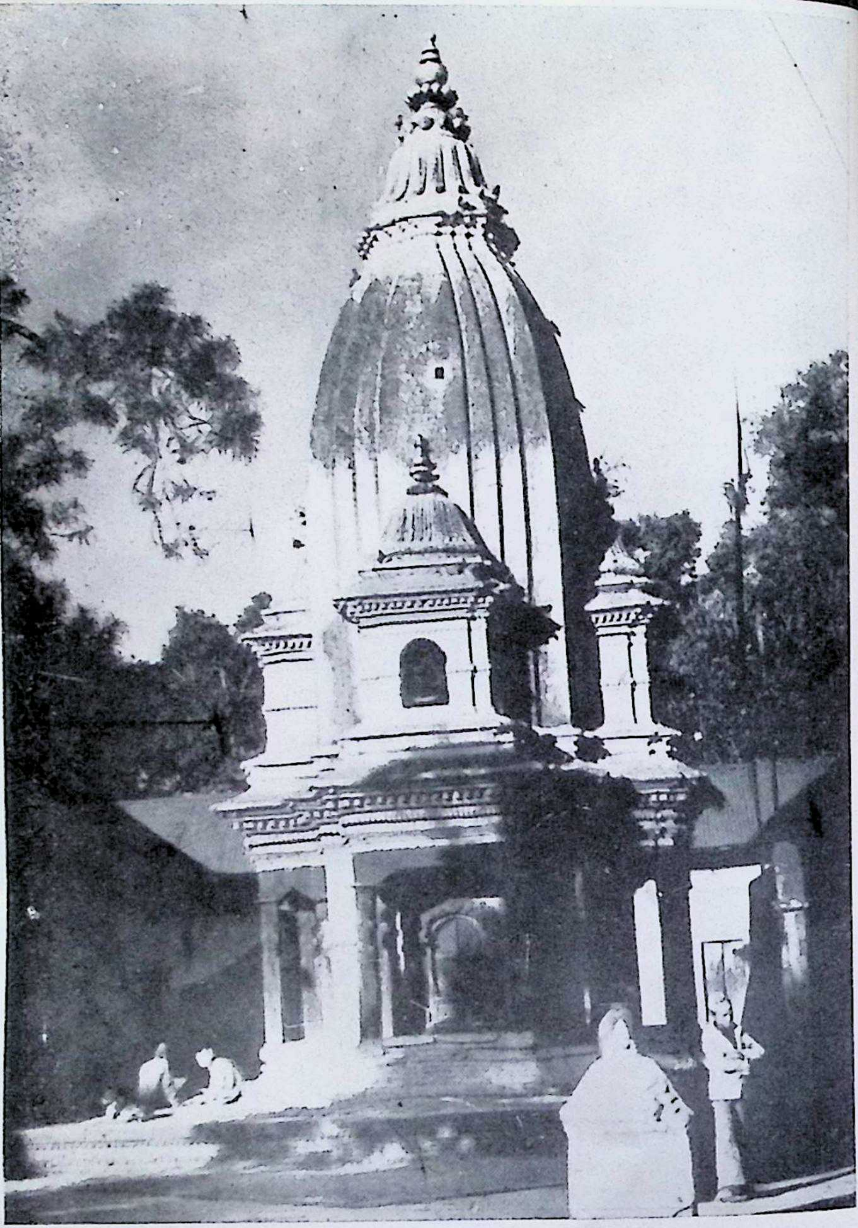
It is described in the *Vamsavali* that King Shiva Dev II who probably ruled in the beginning of one third quarter of the seventh century and survived until A.D. 714 was very religious-minded and believed in pious acts. He restored the worship of Devi, a *shakti* specially attached to Pashupati. However, the image of goddess was not known. Therefore Shiva Dev II with the help of priests well versed in the Tantra installed the goddess in a *Kalash.* This *Kalash* is worshipped because it is believed that there is the *yantra* of Devi lying hidden in it. The worship of Devi and her installation in a *kalash* with *yantra* has considerable support from several criptures.

DAKSHIN-MURTI TEMPLE

On the way to the Gudeshwari temple, just on the left hand side of the crossing which leads to the western gate of Pashupatinath there is a famous temple of Dakshin-murti



Shiva Temple infront of Rajrajeshwari Temple
on the bank of Bagmati.



Gorakhnath Temple dedicated to Gorakhnath.

temple. It is said that this temple is of the guru or the teacher of Pashupatinath. The temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The idol, made of stone, is in a sitting pose and has four hands. There is a rosary in one of his hands.

The temple stands on one layered plinth, and has two roofs facing south. There are four struts on the lower roof while there are two struts on the upper roof. Struts have erotic poses and have musicians on the lower sides. There are false windows below both the roofs. There is a *Shivlingam* in front of the temple where the bull is also facing. The pinnacle which now is in a broken state is made of cement. The temple is almost in a deserted condition now (Page 178).

The temple has a special program on the *Guru Purnima* day i.e., the full moon day of *Shravan* (July/August).

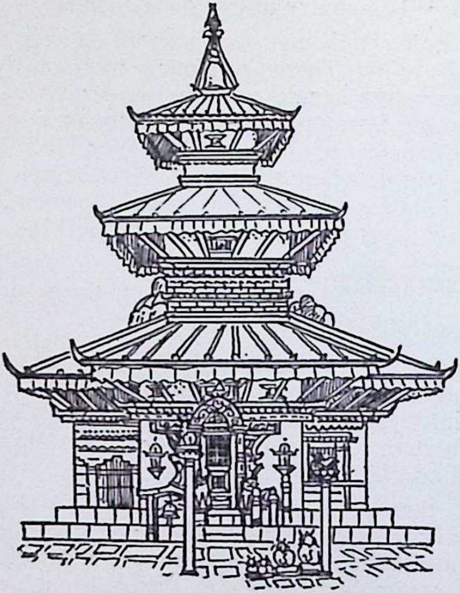
JAYABAGESHWARI TEMPLE

This temple stands on the side of the road which goes from Kathmandu to Bodhnath proceeding ahead from the turning point to Pashupatinath. It dates back to the late 17th century. The temple is noteworthy for its architectural design, large mural and historical importance.

It is a three-storeyed temple which is about 12-15 m. high. The first storey is adapted to provide an unusual shape of extension. All the three roofs are covered with gilt copper. The struts are simple and plain and are without any carvings. They are also placed at various angles and crossed directions to support the overhanging roofs. Quite possibly they are later additions because the temple might have suffered the effects of some natural calamity. The ribs of the roof have heads of semi-divine beings. The pinnacle is usual with a triangle holding an umbrella. Several false windows are also fixed on various storeys. In front of the main temple a Garuda, a peacock and some lions are mounted on pillars.

On the outside of the temple facing towards north there is a mural of unusual feature and size. Of course, it is a fairly recent one and more recently (about 5 years back) it was protected by an iron bar. This painting covers the entire wall from base to cornice. It depicts a fierce god, Bhairav, with his usual aureole and several attendants. The temple is dedicated to Bageshwari, the goddess associated with Bhairav.

This is a tantric goddess. The image is as large as 1.50-1.80 m., is very beautiful and is painted.



Jayabageshwari Temple

There is a very famous story about this temple. Once there was an academic discussion between Amarbanda and Shankaracharya. It is said that the parley continued for several days when Shankaracharya was almost on the verge of defeat. At last he observed that Amarbanda was sitting in front of a curtain. Shankaracharya took no time to tear it away when he saw Jayabageshwari or Neela Sarswati Goddess sitting behind the curtain in the form of *Kalash*. It is mentioned that this Tantric goddess was prompting and inspiring his Tantric devotee Amarbanda, who when the whole secret was disclosed, immediately acknowledged defeat. (Described in more detail in chapter 20).

"God is Infinite, Omnipresent, All-existence, All Intelligence and All bliss."
Veda

22

GORAKHNATH TEMPLE IN DEOPATAN AND PRECEPTS OF GORAKHNATH

In the thirteenth century Jayasthiti Malla re-organised the social structure and the religious customs of Nepal on the basis of caste. The followers of Hinduism and Buddhism were categorised by law in parallel divisions according to the occupation they followed. Rules and ceremonies were drawn up to suit each caste group and the essentials of the status thus bestowed on different groups of people still exist. About the same time arose Naths, the wandering ascetics, who are held in respect by both Hindus and Buddhists. The worship of Matsyendranth is the result of the influence of these ascetics.

In the Pashupatinath area, along the way which leads towards Guheswari there is a beautiful and famous temple of the Nath cult. When one goes along the broad road on the west side of the Pashupati area, he crosses a bridge and on the right climbs up towards Mrigasthali. He has to climb severel stairs to reach Mrigasthali. After walking a short distance there is the temple of Gorakhnath which is probably 2⅓ thousand years old. This temple is dedicated to Gorakhnath whose *guru* (spiritual teacher) was Matsyendranath or *Karunamaya*.

There is a very famous story about the worship of Gorakhnath and Matsyendranath. It is said that Gorakhnath, a disciple of Matsyendranath, came to Nepal but he was given a cold reception. He became angry at the disrespect shown to him and therefore, he stood rooted to particular spot for about 12 years. His anger resulted in a protracted drought followed be famine. Finally, it was presumed that the drought would not end unless Gorakhnath quits his fatal position. Matsyendranath himself came to Nepal at the request of the King from Kamrup (Assam) in India to ask Gorakhnath for mercy and give up the stubborn stand he was taking. To pay respect to his *Guru* (teacher) Gorakhnath moved from his position and soon it began to rain heavily. To respect Matsyendranath, for the favour he had shown in interposing himself in the issue, several temples of Matsyendranath and Gorakhnath were built in the valley.

The t mple of Gorakhnath is about 9m in height and is of *shikhara* style, made of *brick* and stone. The platform on which it stands is not very high (about ·6m). The main entrance faces east and has a small porch supported by four small pillars. On the other three sides also there are small porches. The entrance has above it tympanums and is guarded by two big lions. There are four niches with pinnacles on all four sides. Above the niches there is the main temple projection headed by a simple *gajur* or pinnacle. The pinnacle has a pedestal support of a lotus above which there is a holy pot or *Kalash* and above it is *Chintamani* or jewel. There is no secondary canopy or any other emblem. Beside the temple stands a golden trident with *damru* (mini drum) and *pharsa* (axe) which is about 4·5 m. and which was dedicated to the deity in the V.S. *1908* by Rana Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher.

The main entrance is not very high and is protected by a wooden screen-type of door. The deity inside has a lotus ring with foot-prints of Gorakhnath in silver. On the west side is a small but beautiful image of *Matsyendranath* also called *Karunamaya* or Lokeshwar. The main idol almost resembles that of Gorakhnath at *Gorkha* a place from which Prithvinarain Shah hails. The Gorakhnath Temple at Gorkha is also a most famous *siddhi* (blessed) temple of Nepal and at present it can be reached by trekking only either from Mugling or from Khaireni on way to Pokhara.

A road under construction is almost completed which will lead one straight way to a point below the Gorkha Darbar of Prithvi Narain Shah. In the same complex a Gorakhnath temple stands. There is a famous story about the Garakhnath temple in Gorkha which will not be out of place to mention here. The story is testimony that points out why Gorakhnath is worshipped with great reverence. It is said that when King Prithvi Narain Shah was a child, an old man met him in Gorkha. The old man spat on Prithvi Narain's hand. It turned out to be curds and he asked him to eat it up. However, Prithvinarain Shah did not take it considering that it was something thrown up by the old man. He dropped the curds which fell on his feet. The old man blessed Prithvi Narain saying that if he had taken the curds he might become *Chakravarii Raja* (the unchallenged king of the world) but because he had not eaten it and let the curd fall on his feet he would have that much of empire where his feet would take him. It is further said that the mother of Prithvinarain Shah told him that the old man was Gorakhnath, the famous saint of the Nath cult. She was unhappy that Prithvi Narain Shah had not taken the curds for greater blessings.

Across the small paved way of Gorakhnath Deopatan facing towards the north there is the Mankamana temple, the wish fulfilling deity. It is also a four-walled area and the temple has no roof or tympanum. The *pitha* (accomplished spot) of the goddess is inside the temple. This temple is also quite an old one. The relation of Gorakhnath temple with Mankamana is quite evident ; as in the Gorkha district both the temples of Mankamana and Gorakhnath are regarded as the most sacred which are the abodes of wish fulfilling deities. It is said that those who make a wish and pray to Mankamana Devi at Gorkha get their wishes fulfilled. The people of Nepal believe that the most powerful wish-fulfilling temples are 5 *siddha pithas* of Nepal i.e., *Pashupatinath*, *Swayambhunath*, *Gorakhnath*, *Mankamana* and *Muktinath*.

The temple architecture of Gorakhnath resembles that of Matsyendranath at Bungamati which is a village on the south of Kathmandu.

Gorakhanath is highly revered by the rulers and people of Nepal. In the Royal Coat of Arms below the Crown of Prithvi Narain Shaha (*Shripech*) is depicted a pair of foot-prints known as *Guru paduka* i.e., foot-prints of Shri 1008 times blessed Gorakhnath, the guardian deity of Gorkha from where the Shahs originally came. It is wrong to say as some people imagine that these *padukas* are those of Vishnu which normally are not considered an auspicious symbol.

Gorakhnath was a highly enlightened *mahayogi*, (ascetic) who had a high level of moral self-discipline and spiritual power. He considered metaphysical speculations and controversies valuable as modes of intellectual discipline and for the search of truth. He followed philosophical reflections as part of the comprehensive yogic self-discipline which cauld lead to the perfect illumination of the mind and transcendent experience of Absolute Truth. Gorkhanath philosophy is based on supra-mental and supra intellectual experience in the *samadhi* state. He was an illustrious teacher of *Yoga* and preached *Yogic Philosophy*. The most important philosophical work of Gorakhnath is *Siddha-Siddhanta-Paddhati*, which gives his views on Absolute Truth besides, these are many other philosophical topics written by him. The Absolute Truth is designated as *Shiva* and His unique power as *Shakti*. The *Absolute Reality* concept of the transcendant, self shining, self-perfect indifferential, and changeless spirit is Shiva and as revealing and enjoying Himself freely and eternally in an ever-changing diversified phenomenal cosmic order is *Shakti*. There is practically no difference between *Shiva* and *Shakti*.

According to Gorakhnath Philosophy, in the ultimate *samadhi* experience in which the cosmic plurality is merged in absolute unity, Shiva and Shakti are eternally wedded. Shiva is the father and Shakti is the mother of the universe, though there is no difference between the father and mother as there is no dichotomy on the basis of sex in nature. According to the philosophy of Gorakhnath, the Divine Shakti is neither the non-spiritual nonself conscious *Prakriti* of *Sankhya*, nor the illussion producing inexplicable *Maya* of *Advaita Vedanta* nor Shakti distinct from but possessed and governed by the Supreme Spirit as conceived by many dualistic *bhakti* schools. She is self-manifesting self-diversifying, all-harmonising, all unifying, ever active, dynamic *Sat Chidananda*.

Gorakhnath philosophy recognises the unique power for phenomenal diversified self-manifestation as pertaining to the essential character of Absolute Spirit, gradual unfoldment of Shakti, self-manifestation of Shiva, as cosmic *Purusha*, evolution of cosmic body of Shiva, evolution of a system of worlds in the cosmic body, the constitution of individual body, or the esoteric aspects of the body, cosmos in the individual body, individual soul, supreme ideals of life, etc.

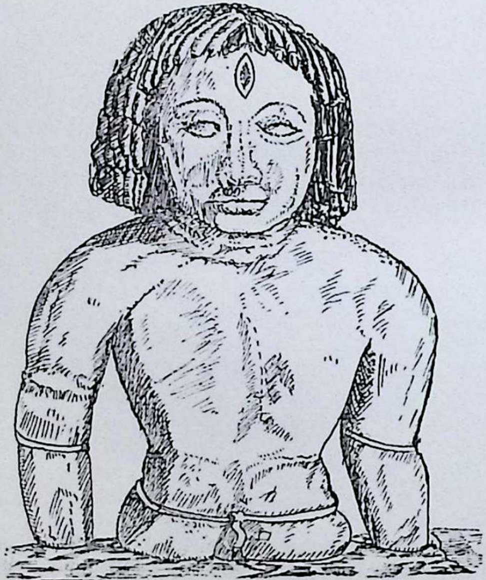
"Early Hindus had fathomless spiritual insight, a subtle intuitive vision and a deep clear and greatly outlived intellectual, ethical thinking, and heroic action and creation. The unique culture and civilization of Hindus is represented in the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the epics."

23

MASTERPIECES OF ART IN DEOPATAN

Nepal is famous for its art which is about 12 hundred years old. The art of Nepal is predominantly religious in character and is highly symbolic in meaning. Expression of art was made through the figures of deities in stone, metal, wood or colour in a variety of forms. Some of these masterpieces of Nepalse art are collected and displayed in art galleries while others are in *situ* in various places of Kathmandu valley.

In the Pashupatinath temple area on the bank of the Bagmati river there are some superb examples of ancient sculpture.



Virupaksha, on the bank of Bagmati

There is a beautiful sculpture of *Virupaksha*, which is half buried in the ground. This is of the Kirant period much earlier than the Buddha period. This sculpture is situated in a small covered temple on the right bank of the river Bagmati near the stairs leading down the Pashupati temple. It is also commonly called as *Kali* (the evil God). There is a common belief that the idol is coming out very slowly and when it comes out fully that will be the doomsday or the end of the world. And then *Satyuga* (the age of truth) will begin. The statue is made of unpolished light gray stone. The face looks very serene. The body in general is well-proportioned. There are no ornaments or drappings on it. Its ears are long.

The *Skand Puaana* gives a very interesting description of *Virupaksha*. It is said that he was the son of a Brahman named Dharma Sharma and was born in a very holy family in a big town of Antarvedi*. He became a great sinner by indulging in prostitution, and adopting bad habits. He also deserted his wife out of shame and curse. He became leprous and one day as he was drifting from place to place he reached various pilgrim spots of Nepal. He met saint 'Ne' of Nepal who advised him to have a bath in holy rivers, visit pilgrim spots have *darshan* of *linga*, and apply ashes on the body. Saint 'Ne' said that in Nepal there are thirty five million five hundred pilgrim spots. It is mentioned that Virupaksha visited various holy spots of Nepal and got over his leprosy. Virupaksha had a holy bath in the confluences of various rivers. He had a holy bath in the river Bagmati also and worshipped the *adi-linga* of Pashupati. As a result of his religious deeds Virupaksha became a young man full of vigour and charm having the strength of a warrior.

In front of the Virupaksha at Pashupati there is a small image of *Mrigeshwar*, the god in the guise of a deer. By the side of Virupaksha there is the image of Ganesh and adjacent to him is Kalimata, the mother of Kali. Just in front of the main entrance which is very narrow there are the images of Vishnu and other deities. The temple is not so impressive but is very sacred. Just across the Bagmati above the stairs there is a small temple which is said to be the temple of the mother of Virupaksha. This is very significant as Virupaksha became a sinner by indulging in sex even with his mother. Therefore, she also prayed to Lord Pashupati by way of atoning for her sins.

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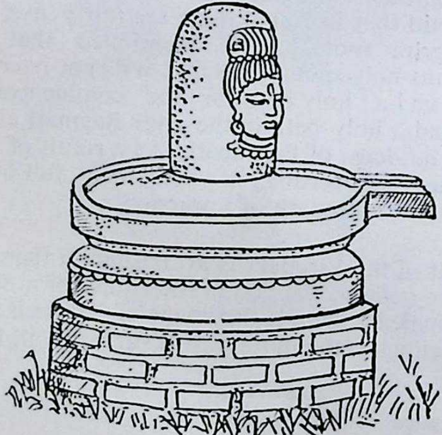
*Present name not traceable

Aklingeshwar or Ekmukha Shivalingam

Overlooking the main Pashupati temple from the left bank of the Bagmati at the distant north end of the observation platform there is a very famous *lingam* with one face. This remarkable image of the Parvati sculptured on a *liagam* stands on a *Jalhari* or *yoni* pointing towards the south. The lingam is about ·45 m. The face of Parvati is looking towards the west. The face is architecturally typical of the Gupta style. She is shown as three-eyed, with a rosary of *rudrakasha* round the neck. Her hair-bun is on the top of the head. The pedestal is about ·6m high and is made of brick. The greatest significance of this image is that perfect bliss, calm and serenity is depicted in purity radiating from the perfectly proportionate, elegant *lingam* and the face of Parvati.



Ekmukha Lingam

Mangal Gauri

In a little enclave made of red brick on the west bank of the river Bagmati and near the bridge leading towards the observation platform and Mrigasthali there is a very important sculpture which is of Mangal Gauri or the Mother Goddess. The goddess is eight-armed. The sculpture represents a transition pattern in architecture and art of classical Gupta style to Eastern India Pala style. The Bachaleshwar Devi has got a usual emblem in the hand. In the elegance, the Gupta style is leading to the ponderosity and plumpness of the Pala style. Beside the Bhagwati there are four *ganas* (attendants). The image is about 0·75 m. in length. In superficiality it has some resemblance to Uma Maheshwar of the 8th or 9th century located in Nagaltole of Kathmandu.

Lakshmi

Beside the Bacheleshwari relief there is an image of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, standing on a pedestal of tortoise or Kurma. The image is of the 8th or 9th century. The ornaments and drapery of Lakshmi are elaborate. Her body is heavy and is in full frontal position. The tortoise is related with Vishnu-Lakshmi myths. *Kurma avatara* (incarnation in the form of tortoise) was of Vishnu for finding out in the seas valuable items lost by gods in the time of the deluge. Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and beauty, came out of the seas. Lord Vishnu made her his consort.

Saraswati

In a small niche just before the Bachleshwari relief on the right side is shown an image of Saraswati. She is shown in her frontal position and having two hands. The body is half-naked and displays full breasts, one hand is kept on the waist while the other hand holds a book. There are two guardian deities. The image is small but it shows some good art style.

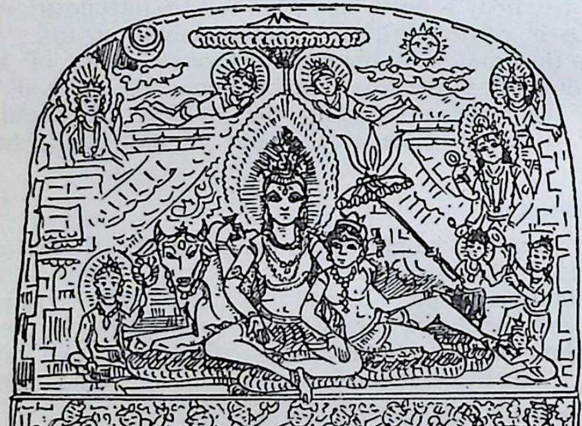
Vishnu

Beside the temple of Parvati or Bachaleshwari as some people call it there is a big idol of Lord Vishnu. This is a masterpiece in art. Vishnu is about 1·8 m. tall. He is 4 handed and has usual emblems of lotus, conch, mace, and wheel or *chakra*. The canopy is also shown as having 7 snake heads. On the base of the image there are several guardian deities.

Buddha

This is one of the superb masterpieces of art and architecture in the Pashupatinath temple area on the Bagmati river. Just in front of the temple of Rajrajeshwari, the Buddha statue is depicted half-buried in the ground on the right bank of the Bagmati near the cremation ground. The Buddha's image is made of unpolished light gray stone. The purity and serenity of the Buddha's face is well displayed. The body is harmonious and well-proportioned. The usual features of Buddha are shown. Ears are long and hair buns are characteristic. The attire is extremely simple. There are no ornaments or other drappings. This Buddhist sculpture depicts the ultimate Indian ideal of a Buddha's face in Nepal. This masterpiece of Buddhist art in Nepal is shown in its best form and expressiveness.

Uma Maheshwara



Uma Maheshwara

This is a beautiful sculpture in the premises of the

Rajeshwari Temple. Mahesh is with four hands and is in an sitting posture while Parvati is just sitting and is a little inclined towards his lap. One hand of Parvati is on the leg of Shiva and the other holds a flower. On the right side there is Nandi while on the left side there is an attendant with *chatra* (umbrella). At the base there is a lion's skin spread out. Above the whole relief there is a canopy. Below there is a column of musicians. Sun and moon are also depicted on sides. The sculpture is about ·6m. in height and about ·45m. in breadth.

A similar Uma-maheshwara sculpture is standing on the ground in the Amarkanteshwar temple which is also at the bank of the Bagmati, extreme away from the funeral ghats towards Rajeshwari Temple.

"The Art of Nepal which is parexcellence superb, is essentially religious in character and highly symbolic in meaning."

24

GOKARNESHWAR TEMPLE

—RAVANA'S PLACE OF PENANCE

GOKARANA

From Bodhnath, one can go by bus or by taxi to the old Newar village called Gokarana gaon (village). It lies on the north of the Royal Game Sanctuary about 10 km from Kathmandu. Before you reach the Royal Sanctuary, turn left and walk straight on along the road until you reach a beautiful three storeyed temple of Shiva known as Gokarneswar Mahadev.

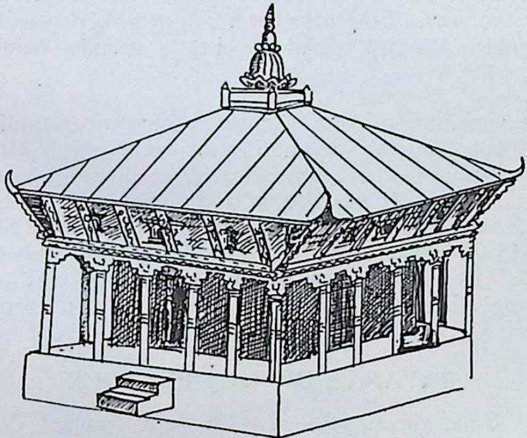
GOKARNESHWAR MAHADEV

On the northern side of Gokarna and on the way to Sundarijal, right at the foot hill of the Gokarna hillock, there lies a beautiful pagoda-style temple of Gokarneswar Mahadev. It lies about 13 km north-east of Kathmandu. This temple is dedicated to Mahadeva or Lord Shiva, one of the Hindu trinity. From here one can see beautiful and scenic views of the river Bagmati. The river flows through a gorge at this point. It is not known who built this temple ; however, it was renovated in 1422 by king Jayasthiti Malla. He also constituted a trust to look after its maintenance and run ceremonies on various religious occasions. This temple has a number of erotic themes on its struts. The big and small windows have good lattice work and exhibit beautiful wood carvings. The *torans* above the doors are also beautiful with usual depictions of *makara* (crocodile) and *Kirtimukha* (face of glory).

This pagoda-style temple is surrounded by a courtyard which houses several beautiful images of less known Hindu deities such as the Sun (*Soorya*), the Moon (*Chandrama*), Narada and more popular images of Shiva and Vishnu. The images are excellent examples of stone art of Nepal. The temple is also remarkable for carvings on the struts. On Father's day (in July/August) those whose fathers are no more in this world visit this temple after a dip in the nearby Bagmati river.

GAJADHAR TEMPLE

This temple which lies close to the main Mahadev temple is somewhat rectangular in shape. Standing right on the bank of the Bagmati there are three doors of the temple, the main entrance being towards the south side. It has got one roof made of corrugated sheets. The pinnacle is very simple and small. The temple has a beautiful standing image of Lord Vishnu. In front of the image there is a unique foot-print of Vishnu. It measures about 30 cm. long and it bears all the four emblems of Vishnu printed on it. There are several other foot points of Vishnu



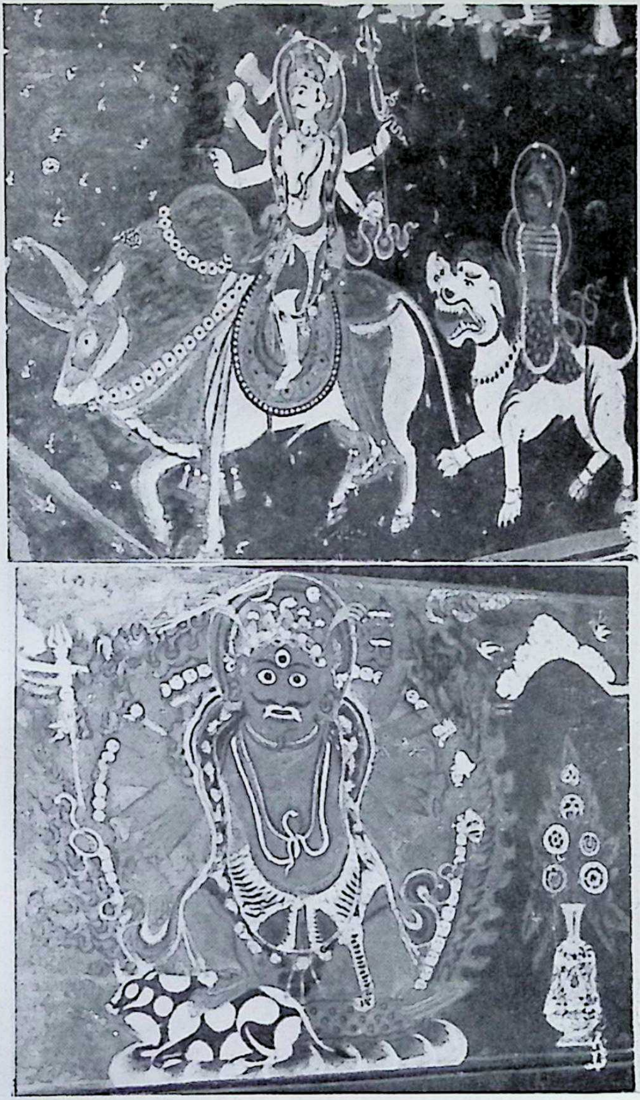
Gajadhar Temple at Gokarneshwar

This place is also called *Uttar Kashi* (North Varanasi) It is said that those Nepalese who go to Varanasi for offering oblation to manes have to do so first at this place of Gokarneshwar otherwise their deed is not rewarded. There is a very famous legend about this temple. Lord Shiva was living in the Shleshmantak mountain in the form of a deer. Brahma, Vishnu and Indra visited this place to see Lord Shiva as they could not get the opportunity of having his *darshan* for several years. The identity of Shiva was disclosed to them when they came to learn that Lord Shiva was going about in the form of a deer that had one horn only. It is further said that Brahma saw Shiva in the form of a deer and caught hold of him by his horn which broke off into three pieces. It is further described that Indra and Vishnu took away two pieces with them while the piece received by Brahma was fixed at this place and therefore, this place is called Gokarn shwar. The *Skand Purana* mentions that *Ravana*, the demon king of Lanka (Mythological) also worshipped Lord Shiva here on the Shleshmantak mountain. The part of the deer horn which was in the hand of Lord Vishnu was also established in the name of Shringeshwar. The name given to this part of the deer horn became known as Dakshin (South) Gokarna. Lord Vishnu established his part in the *Patal* (nether world). In this way the horn of the deer form of Lord Shiva was worshipped regularly by the divine beings, human beings and *Nagas*.

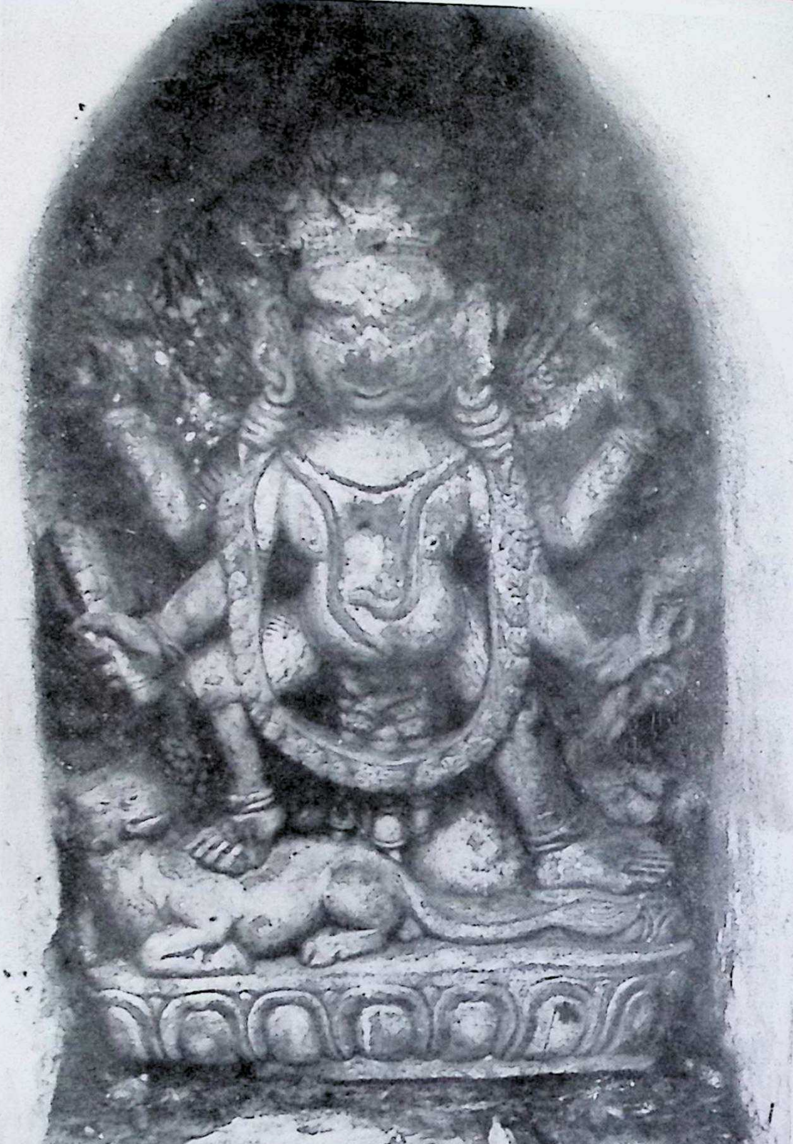
The remaining portion of the deer horn was established at the confluence of the Bagmati and Uttarvahini Gokarna. Brahma worshipped the *linga* with great joy and happiness. It is written in the *Himvat Khand* that when the gods learnt about the establishment of the deer horn of Lord Shiva by Brahma in Gokarneshwar, they started visiting this temple. Mortals also began to come to this temple. So it is said that after establishing the horn of Shiva, Brahma also went to *Brahma Lok*.

RAVANA'S DEVOUT PENANCE

The *Skand Purana* says that a saint named Vishrava practised great meditation here. His son Kubera also practised meditation from the age of 12 upto the age of 25. For his great dedication and reverence Brahma gave a boon to



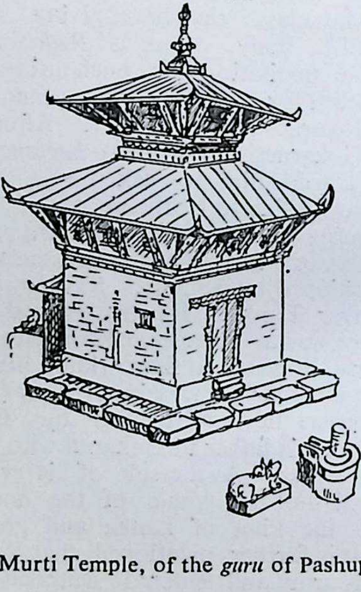
Upper - Shiva and Parvati.
Lower - Bhairabh; old Paintings of Nepal.



Bhairabh, one form of Shiva.

Kubera and made him king of Lanka to rule our demons. He ruled for several years and was moving in *Puspak Viman* (chariot) from Nepal to Lanka. After some time a very intelligent demon king Rajsumali sent his beautiful daughter Nekasi to the hermitage of saint Vishrava. The saint fell in love with Nekasi and a very fierce-looking ten-headed son was born to them. He was very strong like the *Gajlok* mountain. Later his brothers Kumbhakarna and Vibhishan were also born. One day Kubera, the eldest son of saint Vishrava came in his Puspak Viman to meet his father. Ravana asked his mother who he was to which she replied that he was Kubera, his step-brother. Ravan expressed his desire to get the *Puspak Viman* (chariot). The mother asked Ravana to worship Gokarneshwar Mahadev, the boon-giving deity. Ravana applied ashes on his body, wore a *Rudraksha* rosary and engaged himself in meditation by enchanting *mantras*. He practised meditation for ten thousand years by offering his own heads to Gokarneshwar Mahadev. After seeing such a devotion, Lord Gokarneshwar (Shiva) became highly pleased with Ravana and told him to ask for a boon. Ravana prayed that he would like to be the master of all three *Lokas* (worlds) i.e., *Swarga* (heaven), *Mirtyu* (earth) and *Patal* (hell). Gokarneshwar blessed him. Ravana became very happy and he was also worshipped by demons. Ravana was advised by demons to rule over Lanka. Ravana moved with his army to Lanka. There was a fierce battle between Kubera and Ravana. Kubera also came to fight riding his *puspak viman*. However, he was advised by the deity of *Vayu* (Maruti) not to fight with Ravana as he was blessed by Gokarneshwar. Kubera went to see his father in Gokarna who advised him to worship Gokarneshwar. As a result of his great worship he became the guardian of the whole of the northern region. Ravana became the king of Lanka and got possession of *puspak viman*. It is further mentioned that Ravana went to Indralok with his army and entered Amravati, the kingdom of Indra. Indra was worshipping Shiva in the guise of the deer-horn. Ravana took it out and several *Apsaras* (celestial dancers) and again went to Lanka. He worshipped the horn of the deer-form of Shiva and became more powerful. He made a holy temple around the horn of the deer for Shiva. It is still known as Dakshin Gokarna.

Those who worshipped Shringeshwar of the south became very strong demons like Bali, Hiranyakashipu, etc. Regarding the significance of Gokarneshwar it is described that those who pay a visit to it with reverence will become free from births and rebirths, and from sins, will get Shivlok and will merge with him.



Dakshin-Murti Temple, of the *guru* of Pashupatinath

"*Linga* is a symbol of the reproductive forces of nature, the generative source of all living being."

25

FESTIVALS OBSERVED IN PASHUPATINATH

Nepalese culture is vividly represented not only in the form of its temples and shrines, idols and murals but also in the very life-style of the people and in the way they practise their religion and observe festivals. Festivals in Nepal can be regarded as the lens through which the distinctive culture of the country is brought into focus. Most of these festivals of Nepal are traditional in nature and must have originated several centuries ago. These festivals are being celebrated all through the ages with the same belief and with the same interest.

In the valley of Kathmandu, religion, festivals. and social life are so intermingled that they all combine to make the total life of the Nepalese essentially complete. Legends and mythological stories lend credibility to the elaborate rituals that underlie the festivals. These festivals form an important part of the mainstream of life in the Kathmandu valley. The days on which the festivals, religious processions (*jatrās*) and ceremonies are to take place are fixed according to the *Vikram Samvat* (era) or to the *Nepal Samvat* both of which are concurrently in vogue in Nepal. In most cases in Nepal the lunar calendar based on the Nepal era is followed for determining red-letter days and in others the solar calendar according to the Vikram era is followed. Almost all the people take part in festivals. On these days people do nothing else but enjoy themselves. People look upon festivals as an indivisible part of their life and observe them in ways befitting their standard and status in the society. They believe that the gods will get offended if they do not take part in the festivals. People prepare big feasts and make merry throughout the country or at least in the Kathmandu valley in most cases. On some special days there are big fairs held in the premises of certain shrines in the valley. Some of the important pilgrim-spots visited by large numbers of people are Buddha Nilkantha, Swayambhunath and Pashupatinath. People not only pay a visit to the gods there but also spend hours resting and staying and sometimes cooking their meals as if they were having a picnic.

Festivals of Nepal can be categorized into two kinds :

(*a*) Religious and (*b*) historical.

The following is the list of some festivals which are observed in Pashupatinath 1. Maghe Sankranti 2. Maha Shivratri 3. Nagpanchami 4. Janai Purnima 5. Gaijatra 6. Teej 7. Bala Chaturdasi.

Although in almost all the Hindu festivals, people worship Lord Pashupatinath, especially on Mondays and Saturdays people pay a visit to Lord Pashupatinath. Monday is a special day of Lord Shiva dedicated to the moon god. Saturday is the day of Saturn. On Saturdays, Nepalese worship gods and goddesses to escape from the evil effects of Saturn.

It is described in the *Himavat khanda* that those people who take bath in the holy Bagmati on the day of *Maghe Sankranti* are considered to earn million times more virtue than they do when they take a bath on ordinary days. Those devotees become free from sins, attain great benefits, reach heaven and attain *Shivalok*.

1. Maghe Sankranti or Makar Sankranti

This day falls on 14th January, the first day of the month of *Magh*. On this day, the sun having reached the most southern point in the orbit begins his northern course called *Uttarayana* which continues till the end of June. This day is regarded as holy. The day is the turning-point between winter and summer seasons. It is the coldest day of the year. On this day the sun is worshipped, Goddess *Swasthani*

Bhagwati is also worshipped. Newars call this *'Ghyo Chaku Sallu'*, because on this day purified butter (*ghiu*) and *chaku* (refined molasses) along with some jam are eaten in order to add heat to the body. Vishnu is worshipped on this day. Ladies take a bath in the sacred Bagmati river and the *lingam* (phallus) of Pashupatinath is washed as a part of religious ceremony.

2. Maha Shivratri or Shiva's Great Night

It is celebrated in honour of Lord Shiva on the dark moon day in the month of February/March (*Falgun*). People worship Pashupatinath and Guheshwari Devi at their temples on this day. A large number of devotees go to Pashupatinath on this day. A small fire is held in Pashupatinath, which is worth seeing. Bonfires are made in different pockets of the town in commemoration of this day. Children in groups beg for firewood or even decamp with things made of wood. If any piece of wood is stolen on this day from a person's house, he blames his fate and not the lifters even though they know who have stolen it.

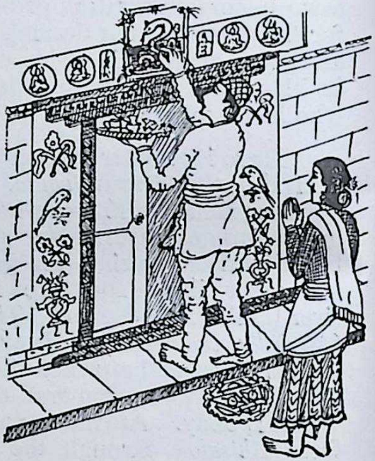
There is another interesting story described about this festival in the *Himvatkhanda*. Once upon a time there was a hunter named *Vishanku* who went for hunting in a forest of mountains and caves. He was very hungry and saw a very beautiful deer grazing on green grass and drinking fresh water at a pilgrim spot known as Tileshwar near the Saraswati river (Lailo khola-Nepal). This forest was rich in *Champa* (*Michelia champaka*). Hunter concealed herself behind a *Michelia* tree and attacked the deer with a bow and an arrow. The deer was wounded and died touching the Shiva *lingam* with his body. At the same time attendants of Shiva came from *Shivalok* through the sky in a chariot. The deer was changed into a deity. The hunter became almost mad to see this happen. After taking a bath in the Sarswati river the hunter attained knowledge and became recluse. He threw away his bow and bent his head down before the *lingam* and worshipped it. This pious day was the 14th day of the dark fortnight in *Falgun*. This day is known as Mahashivratri as the hunter become pious. Later the hunter also died and Lord Shiva's messangers came in a chariot to take him to *Shivalok*. Some give a somewhat different version. According to them, a hunter to hide himself in the night from wild animals climbed a tree which was of *Bilva* (*Aegle*). He passed the night by plucking leaves and throwing them down. It is said that there was a Shiva *lingam* beneath the tree. The leaves of *Bilva* fell down on Shiva *lingam*. God became pleased with him and blessed the hunter with immortality. Therefore, it is called Shiva's Great Night. Devout Hindus fast and remain vigil on the night of this day. Mahashivratri is strictly distinguished from Shivratri which falls on the 13th day of the dark half of every month.

3. Nagpanchami

It falls during the monsoon months [on the fifth day of the bright lunar fortnight late in July or early August (*Shravan*). People visit Lord Pashupatinath and worship snake-gods and images. There is a custom among the people to stick on this day a picture of of snake or snakes at the main door of their houses. This they do in the belief that the propitiation of snakes brings prosperity.

4. Janai Purnima (Raksha Bandhan)

This day falls on the full moon day of *Sharavan* (late July or early August). On this day the sacred thread worn by Brahmans and Kshatriyas is changed. Everyone gets a string of thread tied around his or her wrist by a Brahman which it is believed will ensure protection throughout the year. On this day special activities are also seen in Pashupati Nath temple where devotees visit for getting sacred



Worship of Snake at Nagpanchmi

threads by Brahman. On this day, a special fair takes place in Kumbheshwar, Patan.

5. Gai Jatra

It falls on the day after *Janai Purnima*. This day is celebrated, especially by those people in whose family someone has died within that year. Small children are made to represent cows or ascetics or even clowns and are sent round the city. Some parties go to circumambulate and have *darshan* of Lord Pashupatinath. This custom is based on the belief that the cows will help the dead to cross the river *Baitarani* (hypothetical river) on their way to the land of the dead. The festival is virtually a carnival backed by religion. In Patan, the festival of Mataya is observed on this day. In Bhaktapur this festival takes a more spectacular form ; there are colourful processions marked by dances and music with extremely gay and catchy tunes.

6. **Teej** (The Festival of Women)

This day falls on the third of the bright half of the month of August/September (*Bhadra*). On this occasion women go to visit Shiva in Pashupatinath and worship Parvati, the devoted spouse of Shiva. Women observe 24 hours' fast when they do not even drink water. The women take a ritual bath in the holy Bagmati on Panchami day in which they wash themselves for 365 times to become clean. For women folk of Nepal it is an annual occasion to cleanse themselves. The Teej day is spent on worshipping Lord Shiva and his devoted wife Parvati. On this day women in Nepal dance and keep vigil throughout the night in Pashupatinath temple. The married women offer their prayers and offerings for a long and happy life of their husbands while unmarried girls presumably do so in the hope of getting suitable husbands in future.

7. Bala Chaturdasi

This is observed on the 14th day of the dark moon fortnight in November or early December (*Mangsir*). This day is observed in memory of near and dear ones in the family who are no more in this world and to honour Bala, a demon. On this day, devotees visit Pashupatinath and take a holy dip in the river. They also scatter a variety of seeds in the forest of Pashupatinath as they go round. This is done in the belief that the dead relations may reap the fruits of this merit in the next world. This festival is also called *Satabija* in Nepali. The *Himavat Khanda* mentions that those people who circumambulate the Mrigasthali mountain and scatter seven types of grains the virtues which they earn by scattering one grain is equal to one rati* of gold *i.e.* 2¼ grains of gold in weight. There is an open plateau on a hillock leading to Pashupati temple on the north side. There are eight *lingas* established at various places. These *lingas* are in *yoni* and are not *Pashupati form*, a characteristic of Nepal Shiva linga. It is described that in *Marga* (November) or early December on the 14th day of dark moon day Lord Shiva took the form of a deer and gave *darshan* to the devotees who came for scattering seven types of grains. On this day there is a common belief that divine oracle comes out of the mouth of Shiva in his deer form. Those who reach this spot and hear divine and sweet divine revelations earn benefits and welfare of all living beings of this world.

"Those Hindus who do not believe in God, but consider religious-minded people as orthodox, resort to some sort of religious act when they become old, sick, or suffer from miseries, troubles or pray for their departed ancestors.

---

*Ratti Seed of *Abrus precatorious*

CALENDAR OF THE FESTIVALS HELD AT PASHUPATINATH (DEOPATAN)

S.N.	NAME OF FESTIVALS	1981 Day, Date & Month	1982 Day, Date & Month	1983 Day, Date & Month
1.	Maghe Sankranti	Wednesday, 14th January	Thursday, 14th January	Friday, 14th January
2.	Maha Shivratri	Wednesday, 4th March	Monday, 22nd February	Friday, 11th February
3.	Nagpanchami	Wednesday, 5th August	Sunday, 25th July	Saturday, 13th August
4.	Janai Purnima	Saturday, 15th August	Wednesday, 4th August	Tuesday, 23rd August
5.	Gai Jatra	Sunday, 16th August	Thursday, 5th August	Wednesday, 24th August
6.	Teej	Tuesday, 1st September	Saturday, 21st August	Friday, 9th September
7.	Bala Chaturdashi	Wednesday, 25th November	Thursday, 14th December	Saturday, 3rd December

26

PASHUPATI TEMPLE AT BHAKTAPUR

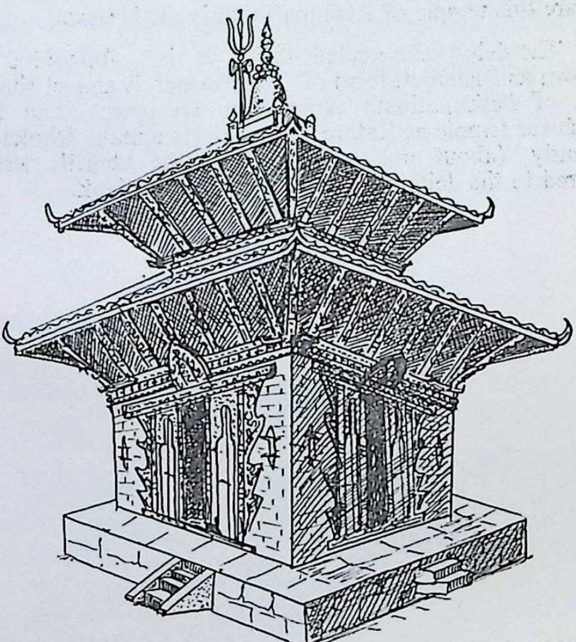
There is another temple dedicated to Lord Pashupatinath in Bhaktapur.

Bhaktapur (alias the city of devotees) or Bhadgaon is an ancient city of the Kathmandu Valley. It is about 15 km. east from Kathmandu. The city is of great historical importance and was built in the shape of a conch shell, as it is believed, by Lord Vishnu. Bhaktapur is the gateway to the Kathmandu Valley from the eastern side. This city was initially founded by Lichhavi rulers but the credit for founding it in the modern form goes to King Anand Malla in A.D. 889. It lies at an altitude of 1400 m. and covers an area of 6·4 square kilometres, which is divided into 24 wards or sections. The total population of this city according to the census taken in 1971 is 110, 157. Though the city of Bhaktapur is largely inhabited by Buddhists, Hindus exert a great influence there. It is also pointed out by scholars that the city was once under the overbearing influence of Shankarcharya.

PASHUPATINATH (Bhaktapur)

This temple is regarded as the oldest temple in Bhaktapur. According to Bernier (1970), it might have been constructed after the death of King Yaksha Malla in 1492 by his wife and sons. However, more historians believe that it was built by King Jitra Malla, father of celebrated King Bhupatindra Malla in 1682. According to a legend, Lord Pashupatinath of Deopatan asked the King in a dream to build a replica of the Pashupatinath temple in Bhaktapur. According to another story, the King of Bhaktapur always used to go to visit the temple of Pashupatinath in Deopatan but one day the Bagmati river was in spate and it was not possible for him to cross it. Then the King gave order to get a temple of Pashupatinath built at Bhaktapur itself. Whatever may be the reason the temple of Pashupatinath at Bhaktapur has the same number of storeys and the proportions of the building are also the same as those in Deopatan.

The temple is two-storeyed with double wall construction standing on a 1·20 m. plinth. All the four sides have triple door in which the central door has *toranas*. Generally the



Pashupatinath Temple, Bhaktapur.

door on the south side remains open. The walls are made of brick, cornice levels have abstract forms and are highly carved. The beams end in the walls above which there are small windows. The struts are well carved with figures of deities. There are 5 struts with corner struts. The erotic reliefs are very elegant and charming. The corner struts have *sardul* (griffin) and other hybrid animals carved. Both the roofs are quite simple and tiled ; the small curves and ribs are cemented. Along the edges of roofs a simple decorative boarder of white flowers is painted. Bells, metal-banners or *dhwaja*, *kalasha* (holy pot) are not present. The pinnacle is of a basic design with a rod support for *trishula* (trident). The spire is golden and lustrous. In the whole of the Durbar square this temple of Pashupatinath is the largest.

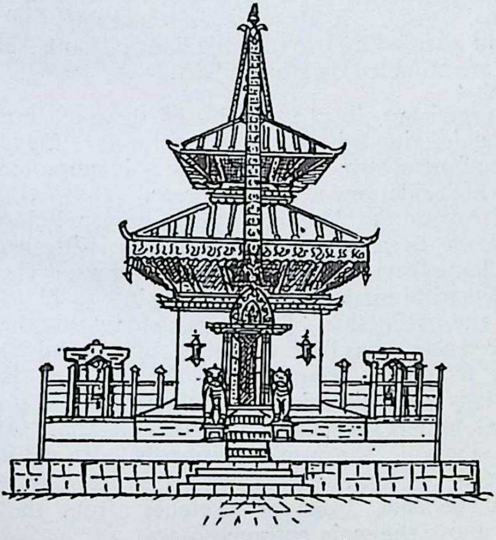
The deity consecrated inside it is a four-sided *lingam* known as Pashupati form of Shiva which is almost similar to that of Pashupatinath temple at Deopatan and Mahendreshwar temple at Kathmandu near Hanuman Dhoka. Very recently (about one year back) some utensils were also offered to the deity mounted on a wooden plank.

Of Lords, the Great, the Mighty Lord, of Gods the Supreme God also, of Rulers the Supreme Ruler, Beyond all we know that God (*Deva*) the Adorable Lord of world. *Upanishada*

27

MAHENDRESHWAR (PASHUPATI) TEMPLE AT KATHMANDU (NEAR HANUMAN DHOKA)

The name of this temple is Mahendreshwar but it is also called Pashupati by the local people as it is dedicated to Pashupatinath. The image is also similar to that of Lord Pashupatinath Deopatan. When one has *darshan* in the



Mahendreshwar Temple.

evening the adornment is also similar to that of the deity at Deopatan. Therefore, it will be not out of place to describe in brief this temple. Some art-work adjacent to temples are also similar to those of Deopatan.

This is a typical pagoda-style temple. It enshrines *Shiva linga* of the same type as exists in Pashupatinath of Deopatan. The temple was built in 1561 by king Mahendra Malla (1560—74). The image in this temple is very old and is said to be self-existent. The temple was, however, reconstructed in the year 1963. It exists by the side of the lane which passes from Hanuman dhoka to Makhan Tole in Kathmandu.

The temple is two-storeyed and is about 6·0 to 7·50 m. high. It is not enclosed in a courtyard but it stands on a 0·90-1·20 m high platform above the street level. The temple is brightly gilded. The main entrance from the street has an archway made of iron poles, which is flanked by two stone-lions. Inside it there is an enclosure of oil-lamp railing and guarded by two metallic lions on both sides. Two big bells are mounted on stone pillars.

Both roofs are gilded ; the ribs of the roof terminate in faces of semi-divine beings. Both storeys have *Kinkinimala* or a border of metal strip. The first storey is supported by four struts on each side, one at each corner. The second storey has two struts on the sides, one at each corner. False windows are fixed on both storeys. Small bells with leaf shaped pendants hang from the beams of both storeys. The cornice is cemented with usual beams fixed to it. A big mirror is hung on the right side of the first storey of the temple. The inner sanctum has four entrance ways. Only the main door has a *torana* (tympanum). The pinnacle is brightly gilded. It is quite prominent in shape and size having a triangular support with floral designs on top. Above the pinnacle there is the usual umbrella. Recently, electric light is fitted on top. A *dhvaja* or *pataka* or a ribbon-like metal pendant drops or stretches from the pinnacle to a little above the main entrance.

A small narrow wooden stair leads up from the inner sanctum to the upper storey which is perhaps used as store-room. In front of the temple there is a quadrangular metallic base on which the food offerings made to the deity on special occasions are kept. On the right gate of the temple there is a small image of *Nandi* (bull) sitting on a small pillar.

On the road side there is a public tap along with a cistern. On the right side of the temple there is a big room meant for religious functions and group chanting of devotional songs.

Before the main temple is a religious emblem of molded copper in the shape of a square called the *mandala*. It represents deities and serve for meditation. Devoties pay great respect to this emblem before having a *darshan* of Lord Shiva.

On the west side at the back of the temple under the shade of corrugated sheet there is an oil-lamp railing with the image of two *kalashas* (pitchers) jointed together. This image symbolically represents Guheswari Devi. It is a unique kind of image that is found only here. It depicts the great Hindu philosophy of *Shiva-shakti*.

On the left side at the back of the temple there is a stone sculpture of Kamdeva who is associated with some stories of Lord Shiva. This is also placed under a small enclosure and shade. The deity shown here is in a standing pose. He has four hands each holding a *trishula* (trident), *pharsa* (weapon), *kamandalu* (pot) and a rosary. The hair is braided while snakes are used as ornaments. The *linga* is shown in an erect pose, the symbol of procreation. However, facial expressions are benevolent and kind.

Vishnu on Garuda

This stone sculpture is in *situ* lodged in the wall just on one side of Mahendreshwar. The image is very beautiful. It is about 0·60 m. Vishnu is in a sitting position and Garuda, the vehicle, is with folded hands. The four arms of Vishnu have usual emblems. Laxmi, the consort of Vishnu, is sitting in the lap. The image is placed in a niche in the wall. It is one of the masterpieces in stone sculpture.

Radha Krishna

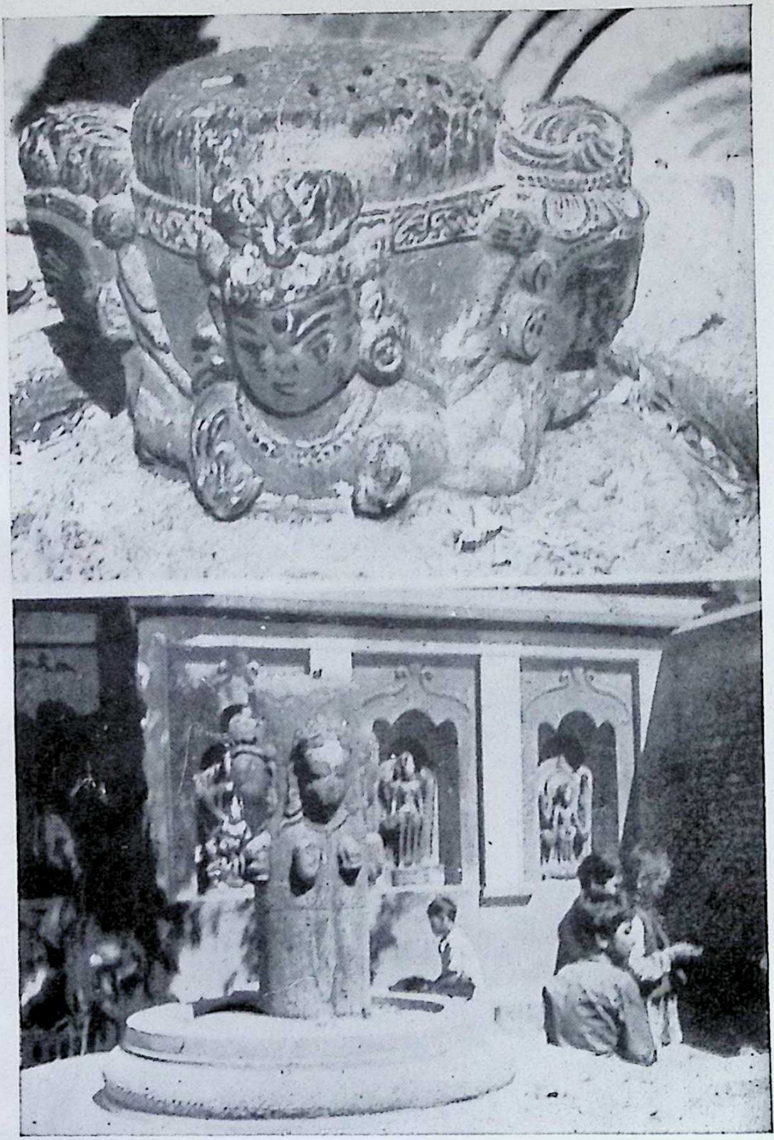
Another beautiful image about 0·30 m in height is placed in a niche in the wall. This stone sculpture is of Radha-Krishna in a romantic mood. They are in standing poses below the *Kadam* (*Anthocephalus cadamba*) tree. Krishna is shown with a flute in hand. He is crowned with *kirti* (crown) and a long garland adorns his neck. Another attendant is also shown with a *chamar* (holy flywhisk) and a pitcher.

Several other small images are placed on the wall.

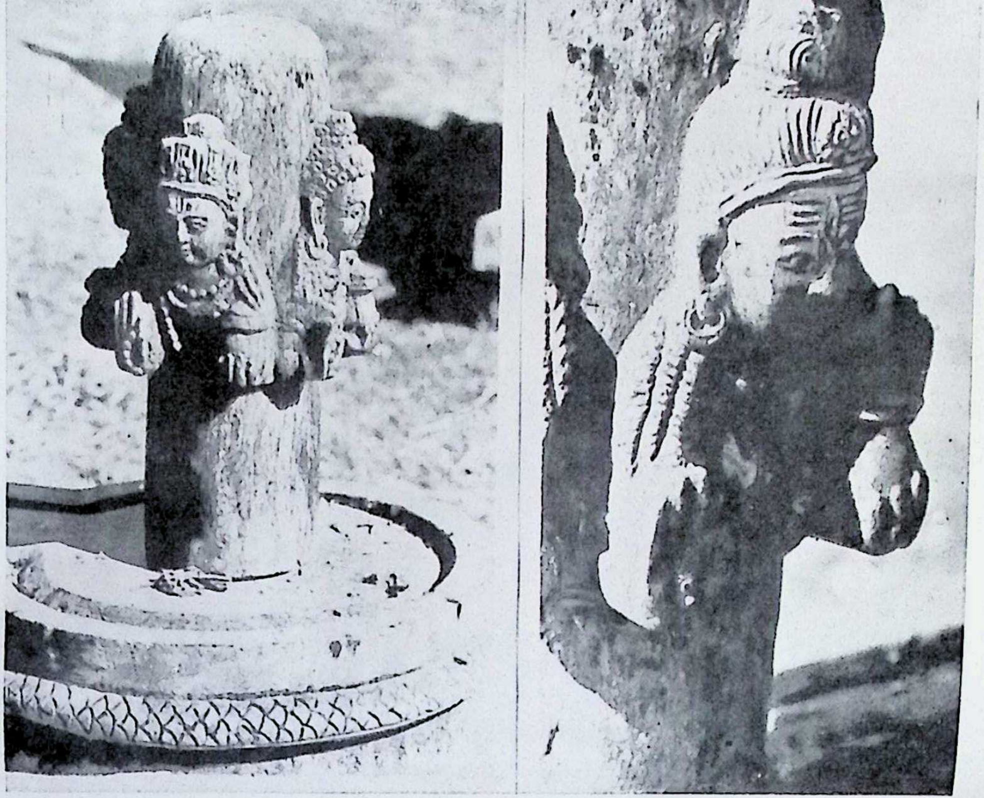
Shiva-linga

A small Shiva-linga stands on a stone base in the open street. This small *Shiva-linga* is placed on a *Jalhari* (*Yoni* or female organ). The *linga* is about 0·45 m high and depicts the usual faces as they are on all the four sides of the *Shiva-linga* of Pashupatinath.

"It has arms and feet on all sides ; Eyes, hands and mouths on all sides; And it pervades everything in this world". Gita.



Pashupati form of Shiva lingas in Nepal.



Faces of Pashupati.

28

EROTIC THEMES ON SHAIVITE TEMPLES

Erotic art is highly represented in some of the temples of Pashupati area and other adjacent temples. The following are the places where erotic reliefs are well depicted.

1. *Vasuki Nath Temple* in Pashupati Temple (Deopatan).
2. *Mukti Mandal* in Pashupati Temple (Deopatan).
3. *Bachleshwari Temple* in Deopatan.
4. *Pashupati Temple* at Bhaktapur.
5. *Gokarneshwar Temple* at Gokarna.

The erotic reliefs are not porus or object of mockery. Some of these amorous depictions are superb and are masterpieces of art and of great philosophical significance. Though people look upon them with a feeling of embarassment they are not something that just repels or astounds one because they seem so out of place in a holy place like a temple. But they are matters of great symbolic significance. These are not merely for the purpose of decoration or for adding elegance to utility in architecture. In the erotic art work, there is an influence of the age-old concept of *lingopasana* worship also. The Hindu philosophy of life has always been a source of great inspiration for these representations. The Hindu philosophy answers the burning questions like those of birth and death, love and sacrifices, transmigration of the soul, salvation, manifestation, etc. Lord Shiva is regarded as god of creation therefore, *Kama* the divinity of lust, is well represented. Shaivites also believe in *Shakti* which is based on the concept of a woman as power and energy. In Shaivism this power or energy includes the power of wisdom and the power of action. Erotic depictions also represent an eternal cycle of reproduction. Besides, there are several interpretations about the advantages of these depictions as for example lightning do not strike these temples, they repel evil eyes, they make the edifice immune from the ravages of earthquakes and so on. They test religious-minded persons on the basis of purity of look, point out man-universe relationship, and an impact of mystical thoughts, and imply a concept of *ardhanarishwara* or hermaphrodite, Shiva-Shakti relationship, cult of Ganesh, etc. These interpretations account for the representation of sexual symbols in the temples of Nepal. The representation of erotic themes on temples of Pashupati and some other places gives a lie to the general notion that erotic themes are depicted only on unimportant places of worship in Nepal. Due to all these reasons a description of some of the erotic depictions will not be out of place here.

Vasuki Nath Temple, Deopatan

As already mentioned this temple is situated beside the temple of Pashupatinath and is dedicated to Vasuki, the king of snakes. There are four struts on each side which show intertwined snakes. At the base of the struts erotic scenes are depicted.

Mukti Mandal.

It is a raised platform covered with corrugated sheets situated on the east side of the main temple of Pashupati. It is said that devotees should sit on it for getting mukti or liberation Below the struts facing towards the east and south there are a few depictions of erotic themes. Generally they are unnoticeable These erotic themes falsify the notion that there are no erotic themes in the temples inside Pashupati (Deopatan).

The main interpretation of the erotic themes in this place seems to be only from the idea of getting *mukti* or liberation.

Bachleshwari or Parvati Temple.

As already mentioned this temple is at bank of the Bagmati river. It is a two-roofed temple. At the base of the struts on the lower story, superb erotic art is seen.

Pashupati Temple at Bhaktapur.

This temple is situated in the Durbar Square of Bhaktapur. The erotic reliefs on this temple are uniquely superb. They are crass and peculiar. There are 6 struts on each side and the erotic themes carved on all four sides of the temple are captivating enough.

Gokarneshwar Temple at Gokarna.

There are not many erotic themes on the Gokarneshwar temple but there is another small temple near it known as *Gajadhar* temple. On this one-storeyed temple there are three gates, one on each of the three sides. There are six struts on each side. At the base of the struts erotic themes are depicted. The erotic art specially on the east and the north is significant.

Conclusion.

Temples are of great attraction from the point of view of erotic art*. Some of these temples are well maintained and beautifully ornamented. The varied erotic depictions bring out significant facts on sexual life viz., exhibitionism, copulation or *asanas*, perverted sex, romantic poses, depiction of lust or *varada mudra* i.e., boon-giving pose, animal copulation, skeleton, various warriors demonstrating *Shakti* or valour, collecting semen, the essence of life.

Thus in the Shaivite school of religion there is a great symbolic significance of erotic reliefs. The divine act of coition can be understood to have an amorous end. Shakti is symbolised by the bliss inherent in *yoni* and supreme Shiva is represented by *linga*. The ideal state of their union conduces to tremendous worldly pleasure.

We have described eroticism only as pertinent to the temples in our context and have been very conservative in its delineation here. Besides till today most people show some kind of prudery or inhibition remaining circumspect in this matter and do not go beyond the bounds of the general acceptability of this subject. However, we believe there are many spiritual implications of them.

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*Those who are interested in this subject may refer to "Erotic Themes of Nepal" by Majupurias for greater details.

29

EMBLEMS OF SHIVA

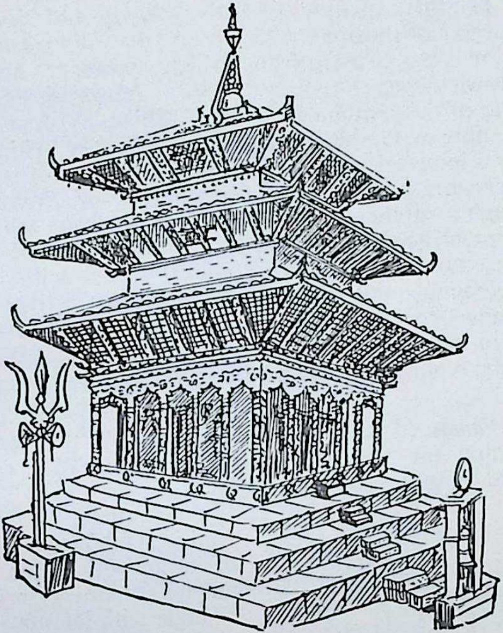
The following emblems are associated with Lord Shiva in various forms. Each has its own symbolic significance.

1. *Trishula* or Trident
2. *Damaru* or Mini-drum
3. Bow and arrow
4. *Kamandalu* (water pot)
5. Skull
6. Sword
7. *Pharsa* (Axe)
8. Rosary (*Rudraksha mala*).

Divine weapons are worshipped by the followers of Shiva and Shakti. Shiva-worship was in vogue much earlier than the any other form of religion emerged. Shankar Deva dedicated a huge trident to Pashupati in Kathmandu. The symbol is also represented in Nepalese coins. The worship of *sastras* or weapons carried by the deity is enjoined in books of rituals and Tantras. Offering a *sastra* and *vahana* carved in stone, metal, etc. in the service of divinity, is considered to be an act of religious merit.

The *praharna* or *sastras* depicted on coins are Tantric in origin. The Tantras recommend two types of worships (*a*) *sthula* or gross and (*b*) *sukshma* or fine. The gross-worship has several stages comprising adoration of terms in three dimensions i.e., grossest painting on the flat, then of the emblem and lastly of *yantra* or diagrammatic body of *mantras*. The three dimensional form is divided into two categories.

The first is related to external objects associated with the divinity and the second is related to the image of divinity, the meditational or *dhyana* form. In Nepal even on the coins, the *vahana* and *sastra* or *praharna* are depicted. The practice of their depiction came into being during the period of the Malla Kings.



Lakshmeshwar Mahadeva Temple, Teku with trident and Damaru.

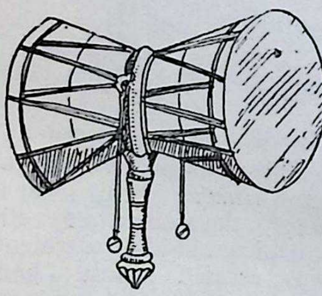
In all the reliefs representing Shiva on the Himalaya, some staff like weapon or his trident (*trishula*) or his spear is shown. Even in the *tandava* dance, the violent, phrenetic effusion of divine energies, Shiva is depicted holding a trident. When the supreme Goddess Devi was created a host of gods handed over their weapons, utensils, ornaments and emblems. These contain their particular traits. Their all the comprehending source out of which they themselves evolved, merged their desparate nature and desparate powers of actions. At this time Lord Shiva handed over the trident to the Devi or Goddess. In several Umamaheshwar poses, Shiva and Parvati are depicted. In these sculptures Shiva's staff with the trident is shown in the foreground.

Trishula or Trident consists of three *shulas* or prongs representing three *gunas*—Sattva, *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

The three qualities of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* constitute the power of illusion or *Maya* of the immensity. Maya or illusion is the vacuum from which existence and three basic tendencies (*gunas*) appear to arise. *Ishwar* is described as the power of the combined form of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. The supreme Goddess is called the power which appears in several immensity. From the point of view of cosmology this power when manifest is called Nature or *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* through a subtle elementary essence is made up of three constituent principles or elementary substance called *gunas*. It is regarded as a cord which bind the soul with a triple bond *viz.*, goodness or purity (*sattva*), passion or activity (*rajas*) and darkness or stolidity (*tamas*). The doctrine of three eternal principles is called the Sankhyan trinity just as *Sacchidananda* may be regarded as the trinity of Vedantists.

DAMARU

Damaru (double-ended mini type of kettle-drum) is also represented on the reverse or obverse sides of the coins minted by some Nepalese kings.



Damru, the drum of
Lord Shiva

As already mentioned, the yoni is symbolized by a triangle of Nature which represents fundamental qualities or *gunas*. The triangle with its apex turned upwards is considered fiery while the triangle with apex looking downward is considered to be watery. When one triangle is superimposed so as to form a hexagon, it manifests what is symbolically a union of universal creative forces (Page 61). When the apices of these triangles are placed in contact with each other it is called the point or bindu from which mainfestation starts. The position of the triangle forms the figure of *Damaru*, the drum of Lord Shiva, which he carries in his hand. All the rhythms of manifestation have emanated from this instrument.

Shiva, also called Natraja, is represented in several images found both in Nepal and India dating back from 10th to 12th century. The details of these figures are to be read according to Hindu traditions in terms of a complex pictorial allegory. The upper right hand in several images carries a little drum or *damru* for beating the rhythm. Zimmer (1962) aptly writes 'this connotes sound, the vehicle of speech, the conveyor of revelation, tradition, incantation, magic and divine truth''. The sound is associated with Ether, the first of five elements. Ether is primarily the most subtly pervasive manifestation of the divine theory. Out of it, evolved in the first evolution of the universe, all other elements as Air, Fire, Water and Earth. Sound and other signify first the truth, the pregnant moment of creation, the productive energy of the Absolute in its pristine cosmogenetic strength.

In several facile creation of *Tandava* dance, Shiva is holding *damaru* or hand-drum which is similar to hourglass. This drum is beaten for beating time.

BOW AND ARROW

According to the Vedic literature, Shiva in the Kirant period was a huntsman. He, as Lord of the forest and master of animals in the jungles, wandered in forests.

The bow of Shiva which accomplished celebrated deeds is mentioned in religious literature. According to a very old story, the primeval father of the creatures known as Prajapati desired to commit *incest* with his daughter Usha, a lovely maiden. Shiva was requested by gods to intervene and punish the offending progenitor. At this time Shiva used his bow. Later on also Shiva was often requested to intervene to re-establish divine order in the universe. He annihilated the universal strongholds of the demons with a single shaft. Shiva's arrow is regarded as the vehicle of his energy, no less than the *lingam*. In several reliefs, Shiva is shown lifting the bow with his left hand while his right hand is shown drawing the string of the bow. The gesture is maginficant. It is also described in the epic, Ramayana, that Shiva's bow was in the palace of King Janak. (It was a bow that one who will break the bow of Shiva would be married to Sita. Ram of Ayodhya (India) broke it and Sita was married to Rama.) (In Janakpurdham of Nepal, the impression of this Shiva's bow can still be seen.)

ALMS BOWL

It is also called *bhikshapatra* or alms-bowl. Shiva or his various forms hold an alms bowl. The vagrant mendicant usually has it in one hand. In the image of Unmutta Bhairav, he is shown with it, in one of his hands.

There is a legend about the alms-bowl. Once in a discussion about who created the universe. Brahma said that he was the creator. Shiva arrived on the scene and became angry by the assertion of Brahma. Shiva asked Brahma to correct his statement. But he did not. Shiva demonstrated his greatness in several ways. But Brahma did not accept. Shiva became greatly infuriated and assumed the form of Bhairava and cut off one of the five heads of Brahma. However, Brahma was reborn as a result of his great virtue. Shiva was charged with committing *Brahmahatya* (killing of a Brahman). To wash off the sin, Shiva roamed about for twelve years by using the skull (*Kapala*) of Brahma for the purpose of begging alms.

Noose (*Pansa*). It is also one of the weapons of Lord Shiva. Bhairav also hold noose which is also considered emblematic implement.

Hook (*Ankusha*). This is also one of the weapons of Shiva. It is used for controlling elephants.

These weapons are symbolic of the cosmic hero, the conqueror of demon powers. It is said that Shiva conquered a great demon who had assumed the shape of an elephant. Shiva forced his opponent to dance with him which continued until the demon fell down dead. The Shiva wore the skin and wrapped it around him and performed a hurricane-like dance of victory. Owing to this triumph Shiva is associated with noose and *ankusha* for capturing the elephant.

Kamaudalu (water pot)

Shiva is also shown with *Kamandalu* or water-pot. This is symbolic of archetypal ascetic, the representative of spirituality. The Kamandalu or water pot is an attribute of Brahma.

Usually this water pot is made either of a gourd or of metal or wood.

Skull.

Specially in the Tandava dance, Shiva is shown in a violent, frantic effusion of divine energies. He comes out truimphant. In this pose, he is shown wearing a garland of skulls and also with a skull in his diadem.

Sword.

In Bhairava form, Shiva is shown with a sword, a weapon, to indicate his truimph over his enemies.

Pharsa (Axe)

Pharsa or axe is also shown together with the trident. It is also one of the weapons to point out that Shiva is a many-sided god and is the symbol of cosmic hero, the conqueror of demon powers.

Rosary

In some poses of Shiva he is shown carrying a rosary which is held in a gesture of teaching. Pashupati form of Shiva has a rosary in his hands.

Symbolic meaning of some of the important symbols of Shiva.

Staff—represents death.
Shield—represents religion.

Trident—the three *sulas* represent three *gunas* : *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

Serpent—Anger
Tiger skin—Desire
Bull—symbolizes religion
Digit of moon—symbolizes divinity
Matted hair—Absolute.

Shiva's abode is Mount Kailasha which is in Nepal. Kailash is called Shivapuri, where there are many precious things such as pearls, coral, gold, silver etc. Kailasha was previously abode of Kuvera, the god of wealth, who later remained there as a store keeper of Shiva's palace".

"Shiva is connected with the North since mountains of importance lie in the north."

30

SACRED FLOWERS FOR SHIVA WORSHIP

According to the *Shiva Rahasya* there are several benefits of offering special flowers in different types of worship viz., daily, casual, optional worships and worship in special months of Lord Shiva. It is also definite that the worship with flowers is not only a means to achieve three categories of boons *i.e.*, health, wealth and heaven but also a way to salvation. The *Shiva Purana* gives details of these flowers. The *Bhavisha Purana*, the *Shiva Rahasya* and *Shiva Dharma Sangrah* describe the modes of offering of flowers in a particular month to Shiva. The *Shiva Dharma* (Shaiva) narrates the benefit or the result of offering of a particular kind of flower. The difference and speciality of a flower from others are also narrated.

According to the *Shiva Dharma*, he who worships *lingam* with a garland of fragrant flowers receives an everlasting reward. The description of the method of worship of Shiva with specific flowers for a specific purpose or reward is very interesting. There is also a list of prophibited flowers in the worship of Shiva according to the *Shiva Dharma*.

In the worship of Shiva, of all the flowers *Nilamutpalm* (blue lotus) i.e., *Nymphaea stellata* is the most favourite. He who worships Shiva with a thousand garlands of blue lotus will become as powerful as Shiva himself for millions of years living in the domain of Lord Shiva.

Regarding the importance of common flowers it is described in the *Shiva Rahasya* that Gods are pleased with offerings of flowers during worship. Gods are seated on or live in the midst of flowers. It is suffice to say that an offer of flowers helps fulfil one's desires and get cherished objects. Great effulgence is there in flowers and it is the flower that pleases gods. It is mentioned in the Sanskrit literature that Brahma lives at the root of flowers, Vishnu at the middle and Mahadev on top of a flower. Thus all the three divinities live in a bunch of flowers.

According to the *Shiva Purana*, white flowers are for gods, bad smelling ones are for devils. Red flowers are for monsters. Those flowers which are plucked prematurely and those flowers plucked by others are not fit for worship. If a woman offers to *lingam* a garland of one thousand flowers free from bad smell gets several boons fulfilled and becomes wealthy. If a man offers flowers to a *lingam* he will not have to undergo any kind of sorrow for million of years. Those persons who offer flowers, leaves and fruits of those plants which are fit for worship of Shiva get supreme bliss. If a person worships Shiva with self-produced flowers Shiva will gladly accept such flowers of devotion. According to the *Shiva Rahasya* a person obtains the reward of ten *ashwamedha* (horse sacrifice) even if he worships Maheshwar wlth good five flowers. Regular worship of Shiva with eight flowers entitles a person to go to the abode of Shankara, what to speak of with thousands of flowers.

In the worship of flowers there are several prescribed and a few prohibited flowers: About the prescribed flowers in the Shiva worship, the *Shiva Dharma* mentions that flowers grown in the forest, and those from which cattle are kept out and grow by themselves are worthy of Shiva's worship.

It is said that the soul is the garden of the self which means the mental flowers produced in that garden should be offered to Shiva. It is described in the Sanskrit literature that if Shiva is worshipped with flowers grown by others it will involve one in sin. Take it for granted as true. Theft of flower is also a sin. Manu said 'stealing of flowers for the worship of God is against the rule'. All the worship becomes fruitless if it is done with flowers begged from another. It is mentioned in literature that best flowers for worship are also those which grow as luxuriantly in the villages or towns as they do in the wild, especially in the winter season.

LIST OF SACRED FLOWERS

The following is the list of the sacred flowers which are most pleasing and beloved to Lord Shiva.

Sanskrit	Nepali	Hindi	Botanical Name
Apamarga	Chirchida	Chirchiri	*Achyranthes aspera*
Aprajita	Aprajita	Aprajita	*Clitoria ternatea*
Arka	Ank	Aak	*Calotropis gigantea*
Ashokam	Ashok	Ashok	*Saraca indica*
Bilva	Bel	Bel	*Aegle marmeles*
Brihat	Kantakari	Keteri	*Solanum xanthocarpum*
Buka	Thulo Molsari	Banhaula	*Indigofera enneaphylla*
Champak	Chapo	Champa	*Michelia champaca/* *Ochna squarrosa*
Darbha	Dub	Dub	*Cynodon dactylon*
Drona	Gumpati	Goma	*Leucas lavandulaeplia* *L. cephalotes.*
Grikarnika	Karhi	Karhi	*Albizzia procera*
Jati	Chameli	Chameli	*Jasminum grandiflorum*
Jaya	Gineri	Ganiyari	*Premna integrifolia*
Kadambarim	Kadam	Kadambni	*Anthocephalus cadamba*
Karvir	Karvir	Kaner	*Nerium indicum/* *Thevetia peruviana*
Kinkiratam	Sano Babur	Katsaraiya	*Acacia leucophloea*

(Contd.)

Sanskrit	Nepali	Hindi	Botanical Name
Kubjaka	Barahmase gulaf	Kujai	*Rosa moschata*
Kusumbha	Kusum	Kusum	*Carthamus tinctorius*
Malli	Malyaguru	Gandha	*Arthemisiamaritina*
Mandar	—	Parijat	*Nyctanthes arbortristis*
Nagkesharam	Nagkeshar	Nagkeshar	*Mesua ferrea*
Neelam	Blue lotus	Blue lotus	*Nymphaea stellata*
Padma	Kamal	Kamal	*Nelumbium speciosum*
Patala	Padari	Padari	*Stereospermum tetragonium*
Putnnaga	Keshar	Keshar	Saffron (*Crocus sativus*)
Raktotpalam	Red lotus	Red lotus	*Nelumbium sp.*
Sankhya pushpam	Ankhuri Phool	Sankhahooli Kodialia	*Canscoria decussata*/ *Evolvulus alsinoides*
Shami	Shami	Chaunkar	*Prosopis spicigera.*
Shikhini	Sahastrijari	Mori shikha	*Celosia argentea*
Sukhandi	Shri Khand	Chandan	*Santalum album*
Tagar	Katsaraia	Katsaria	*Barileria longiflora*
Udambara	Dumri	Gular	*Ficus racemosa*
Unmattam/Dhurustrum	Dhaturo	Dhatura	*Datura stramonium*
Ushir	Ushir	Khas	*Vetiveria zizanoides.*

Several Sanskrit names are synonyms, therefore, Botanical names are given.

The following specific flowers are considered most auspicious for the below-mentioned months.

Asadh (June-July)

After taking a bath on the fourteenth day of the dark moon in the month of *Asadh*, if a person offers flowers of *Sakundikam* (Chandan, *Santalum, album*) after burning incense he will become free from fear, attain a great bliss and go to the domain of Brahma

Shrawan (July-August)

If a man takes one meal a day and worships Shiva with flowers of *Karvira* or *Kaner*, *Nerium indicum* or *Thevetia peruvania* is rewarded with a thousand cows.

Bhadra (August-September)

He who worships Shiva with flowers of *Apamarga* (*Achyranthes aspera*) flies on a chariot with the insignia of a swan holding a flag.

Ashwin (September-October)

He who worships with flowers of *Arka* (*Calotropis gigantea*) in the months of Ashwin flies on a chariot with insignia of a peacock bearing flag.

Kartik (October-November)

He who bathes *Shivalinga* with milk and worships with *Jati* (*Jasminium gradiflorum*) becomes lucky to have a *darshan* of Lord Shiva.

Marga or **Mangsir** (November-December)

One who worships with flowers of *Buka* (*Indigofera enneaphylla*) in the months of *Marg* crosses the three worlds and reaches Shivalok, the domain of Shiva.

Pausha (December-January)

He who worships Shiva with flowers of *Dhurusturam* (*Datura stramoninm*) in the month of *Pausha*, attains the highest position.

Magha (January-February)

He who worships Shiva with flowers of *Bilba* (*Aegle marmelos*) flies on a chariot bearing the symbol of the sun and the moon.

Phalgun (February-March)

He who bathes *lingam* with fragrant water in the months of *Phalgun* and worships with flowers of *Drona* (*Leucas sp.*) acquires half the throne of Indra.

Chaitra (March-April)

He who worships Shankara with the flowers of *Darbha* (*Cynodon dactylon*) along with singing and dancing gets lot of wealth.

Baisakh (April-May)

One who always bathes *lingam* with *ghiu* and white flowers of white *mandara* (*Parijat*, *Nyctanthes arbortristis*) gets a reward commensurate with the performance of *Ashwamedha* (Horse-sacrifice).

Jestha (May-June)

In the month of *Jestha* one should always bathe *lingam* with curd and worship it with *Padma* (Lotus or lily flower) which helps him get the highest bliss.

Regarding the order of importance of flowers, the *Shiva Dharma* lists them as follows :

1. *Arka* (*Calotropis gigantea*)
2. *Karbira* (*Nerium indicum/Thevetia peruviana*)
3. *Padam* (Lotus, *Nelumbium speciosum*)
4. *Buka* (*Indigofera ennacaphylla*)
5. *Dhatura* (*Datura stramonium*)
6. *Brihat* (*Solanum xanthocaroum*)
7. *Drona* (*Leucas lavandulaephia*)
8. *Apamarga* (*Achyranthes aspera*)
9. *Kusha* (*Desmostachya pipinnata*)
10. *Shami* (*Prospis spicigera*)
11. *Nilotpalam*(Blue lotus)

Of all the flowers dear to Shiva, the blue lotus is supreme. Those devotees who offer Shiva a garland of one thousand blue lotus will always live in the city of Shiva as omnipotent as Shiva for billions of years. The *Shiva Dharma* also mentions about *Karbir* or *Kaner* (*Nerium indicum*) flower as follows :

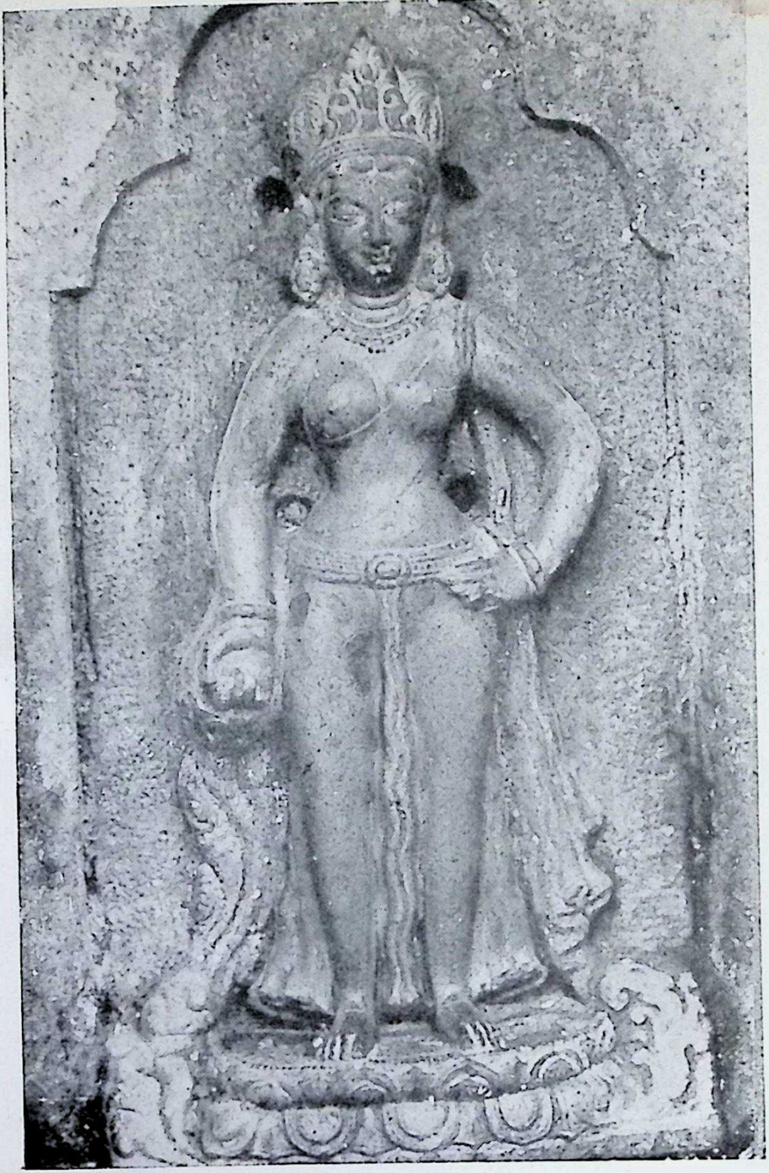
"There is no enemy like sin, nor a friend like piety nor a greater god than Rudra nor a flower better than *Karbir* or *Kanaka* (*Nerium indicum*) also.

It is described in the *Shiva Dharma* that if a person worships *lingam* with fragrant garlands he is entitled to eternal reward. The person who worships *lingam* with the flowers dear to Lord Shiva receives a reward equivalent to the one hundred thousand cows and attains the supreme position. These devotees and worshippers travel to Shiva's domain or Shiva Lok. Those persons who worship *lingam* with flowers dear to Shiva go to the divine city which is lighted by ten million suns, by flying on a chariot, with all his wishes fulfilled, where flowers and garlands are strewn, where sweet and mild voice of song and music pervades the whole region of the heavenly home. A devotee is held in high esteem in the domain of Shiva if he worships Shiva with the water or land lily flowers.

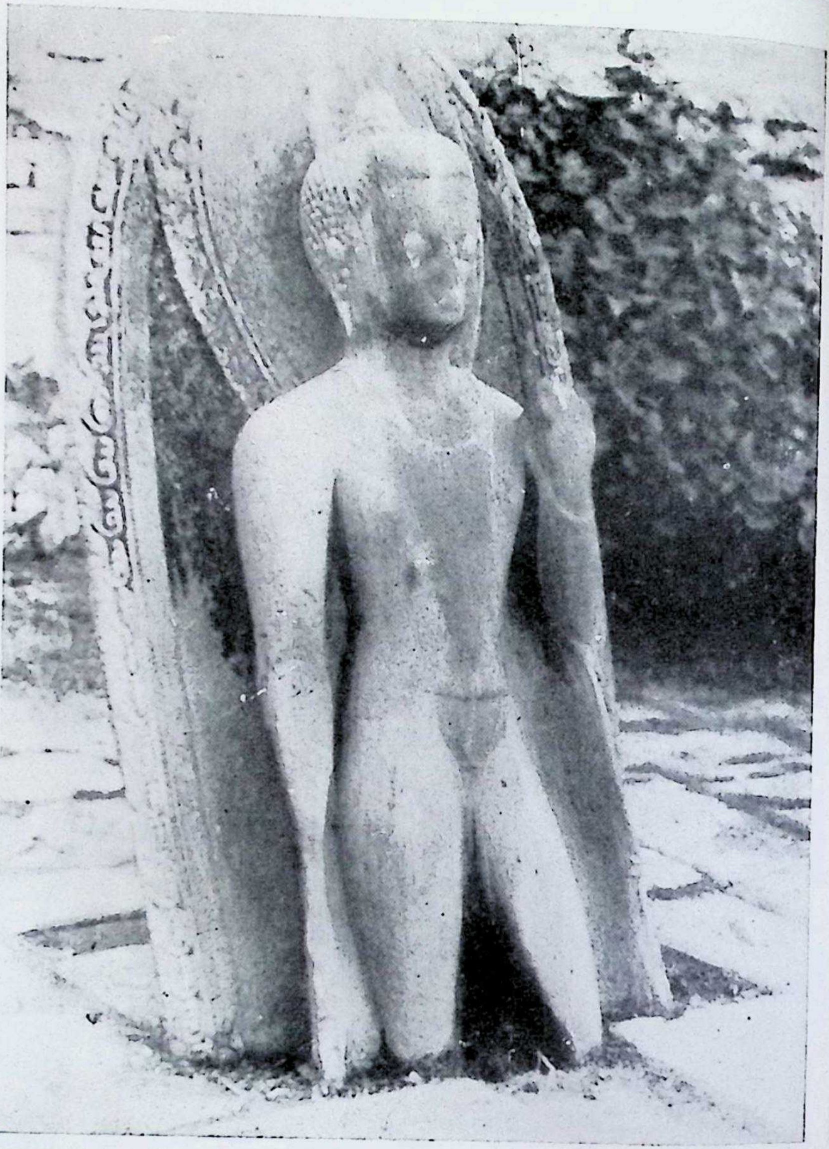
He who puts flowers over the head of Shiva in the form of thick dome and adorns the seat of worship with sweet smelling flowers end to end, goes to Shiva lok, the domain of Lord Shiva by riding a chariot decorated with flowers. If a devotee offers sweet scenting bright flowers to Shiva he enjoys undiminished pleasure. The desire is also fulfilled if he offers flowers to Shiva.

The *Jnyanamalayam* describes the method of offering flowers. If one offers flowers by looking downward one is not rewarded by the Lord favourably. However, offering of flowers by holding them between the palms and by looking downward is not unfavourable that means the offering of flowers by holding them within the palms and looking downward by itself is not a fault.

The *Shiva Dharma* also mentions the time when flowers should be offered to Shiva. *Kanak* (*Nerium indicum*) and *Kadambini* (*Anthocephalus cadamba*) should be offered at night. *Mallika* (*Artemisia maritina*) flower should be offered at midnight. *Jati* (*Jasminum gradiflorum*) flowers should be offered



Saraswati image in Deopatan.



One of the very old sculpture of Buddha
infront of Rajrajeshwari Temple.

three hours before midnight. *Karbira* (*Nerium indicum*) should be offered at midnight.

Regarding the special award one gets by offering different flowers, it is so written in the *Shiva Dharma Samgraha*, that worship of Shiva with the *Buka* (*Indigofera enneaphylla*) flower succeeds in conferring boons on the giver. *Karbira* (*Nerium indicum*) is a giver of wealth by offering *Arka* (*Calotropis gigantea*) prosperity is gained and salvation is attained by worshipping god with flowers of *Dhatura* (*Dhatura stromonium*). He who worships *linga* with flowers of *Neelotpala* becomes the enjoyer of material happiness, with *Raktabja* (red lotus) he gets Kingdoms and with *Pundarika* (white lotus) he gets over-lordship. All desires are fufilled by worshipping with *Champak* (*Michelia champaca*) flowers and one gets all desires fulfilled by worshipping God with flowers of *Nagheshwara* (*Mesua ferrea*) and *Kesharam* (*Mimusops elengi*). He who worships the great god with flowers of *Arka* (*Calotropis gigantea*) becomes lucky in having his power of influencing others as effective. He who worships with fragrant flowers, attains all his desires fulfilled, immense wealth by worshipping with *Kubjaka* (*Rosa moschata*) and fortune with *Dub* (*Cynodon dactylon*). He who worships the great god with flowers of *Jati* (*Jasminum grandiflorum*) with a view to marrying of girl will get one within six months. For the acquisition of knowledge, jobs and wealth one who worships Maheshwara with flowers of *Mallika* (*Artemesia maritina*) acquires such great knowledge as would make him free from fear of the world.

A man of pure heart, he who worships with flowers of *Kunda* (*Jasminum multiflorum*) desiring to have a son becomes father of many rich sons blessed with long life. Worship with flowers of *Kusha* (*Desmostachya bipinnata*) gives a man health and with those of Ashoka (*Saraca indica*) pleasures of meeting with near and dear ones. *Karnikara* (*Theveita peruviana*) wealth and *Drona* (*Leucas lavandulaplia*) flowers power of charming. He who always worship as a regular act, *linga* with *Kadamba* flowers is endowed with power to bring ones enemy under control along with fearlessness.

All the maladies of a person, who worships with *Atimutaka* or *Madhvi* (*Hiptage madablota*) and *Sindhurbara* or *Simali* (*Vitex negunda*/*Justica gendarussa*) flowers, are destroyed and he is set free from bondage.

For the cure of jaundice and nutrition he who always offers *Vijay* (*Acorus calamus*) flowers is cured., with aquatic flowers, one should meditate for the purpose of charming and with blue lotus flowers to bring the enemies under control. For victory, worship should be made with flowers of *Damanaka* (*Artemisia siversiana*) following rules and regulation. Happiness is achieved by worshipping with flowers of fulfilment of desire with that of *Tilak* (*Symblocos racemosa*). Worshipping with *Tagar* (*Barleria longiflora*) gives pleasure. With those of *Kinkirat* or *Babur* (*Acacia leucophloea*) fulfilment of desire, health and wealth.

The flower of *Shal* (*Shorea robusta*) gives endearment and that of *Kinsuka* (*Butea monosperna*) longevity. One should worship Shiva with thc flowers of *Kubjak* (*Rosa moschata*) for the desire to possess elephants, horses and other domestic animals. By offering *camphor* (*Cinnamomum camphora*) if one worships the god of gods for the destruction of enemies, then all of his enemies will soon be destroyed.

Daily worshipping '*lingam*' with flowers of *Shyma* (*Indigofera tinctoria*) will give health, the same is the result of worshipping with *Japapushpa* (*Hibiscus rosasinesis*). Flowers of all colours of *Kurantak* (*Barleria longiflora*) are used for the purpose of getting charm. In jealousy, *Yuthika* (*Jasminum auriculatum*) flowers for extermination of enemies, should be used in worshipping the great god, Maheshwara. Strength and longevity accrue to one who worships God with flowers of *Baska* or *Adusha* (*Adhatoda vasicia*), *Jhintika* (*Heliotropium indicum*), *Apra* (*Clitoria ternatea*) and *Champaka* (*Michelia champaka*). These flowers are always conductive to happiness.

Likewise the flowers of *Aswakarma* (*Shorea robusta*), *Jyanti* (*Sesbania aculeata*), and *Girikarnika* (*Albizzia procera*) are used for victory.

One should worship with *Nim* (*Azadirachta indica*) in jealousy. The flower of *Mandi* (*Albizzia lebbeck*) should be used for causing a spell on other and the flower of *Madanti* (*Jasminium arborescens*) will make one victorious.

Every kind of white flower is used for worshipping Shiva for peace, yellow for nutrition and black in pursuance of black thoughts. Offering of flowers, fruits, leaves, water and grass every day to Shiva will relieve one from impending distress.

31

FLOWERS TABOOED FOR SHIVA WORSHIP

There are some flowers also which are considered as unfit for Shiva worship. According to a legend of the origin of Pashupati form of Linga, *Ketaki* (*Agave Americana*),* *Bandhuk* (*Pentapetes phoenica*) and *Jayapuspa* (*Premna integrifolia*) gave false witness that Brahma had reached *goloka* (heaven) for finding the head of the celestial light. Lord Shiva declared that those three types of flowers together with others would not be acceptable o Him.

The list of flowers tabooed for Shiva worship is given according to the *Shiva Dharma*. Lord Shiva should not be worshipped by these flowers as they are regarded generally as prohibited flower.

Kundam (*Jasminum multiflorum*) flower is prohibited the whole year round for worship but it can be used in the month of *Marga* (January-February) as described in the *Linga Purana.*

FLOWERS UNFIT FOR SHIVA WORSHIP

	Sanskrit	Nepali	Hindi	Botanical name
1.	Ketaki	Kelki, Sunkura	Kevra	*Agave americana*
2.	Bandhuk	Dophare	Dupharia	*Pentapetes phoenicea*
3.	Jaya	Gineri	Ganiyari	*Premna integrifolia*
4.	Atrimuktam	Lahre Chameli	Madhvi	*Anethum sorwa*

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*However, Ketaki flower can be offered to Lord Pashupatinath only on the day of Shivratri. The flower must be ruptured open.

Sanskrit	Nepali	Hindi	Botanical name
5. Kundan	Kund	Kund	*Jasminum multiflorum*
6. Yuthi	Juhi	Juhi	*Jasminum auriculatum*
7. Madantika	Laharbeli	Madyanti	*Jasminum arborescens*
8. Shirish	Shirish	Siras	*Albizzia lebbeck*
9. Malati	Chameli	Chameli	*Jasminum grandiflorum*
10. Khadir	Khayar	Khadir	*Acacia catechu* ; *Uncaria gambhir*
11. Dhatriphala	Amla	Awala	*Emblica officinalis*
12. Kapitham	Kayeth	Kainth	*Feronia linonia*

If anybody will worship *Shiva lingam* with flowers viz. *Bandhukpusha* (*Pentapetes phoenicea*), *Yuthi* (*Jasminum auriculatum*), *Madantika* (*Jasminum arborescens*), *Ketaki* (*Agave americana*), *Jatipushpa* (*Jasminum grandiflorum*), *Aparjita* (*Clitoria ternatea*), he will always suffer from fear. He will be a sinner and will remain in hell.

Following is the list of the flowers which should be avoided in the worship of Lord Shiva :

Kapatham (*Feronia limonia*), *Mandini* (*Jasminum arborescens*), *Kasthapatala* (white rose, *Rosa indica*/*Rosa chinensis*), *Nimba* (*Azadirachta indica*), *Karjendra* (*Helix ashera*), *Dhataki* (*Woodfordia fruticosa*), *Shirish* (*Albizzia lebbeck*), *Atimukti* (*Hipptage madablota*).

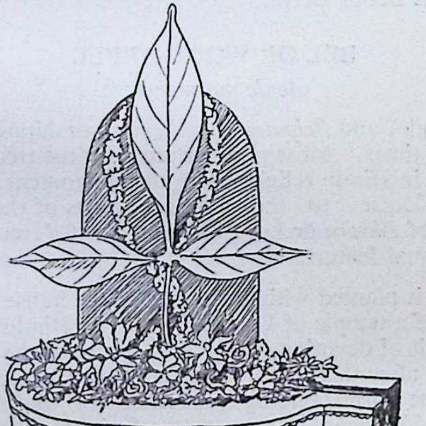
It is further mentioned in the Sanskrit literature that for a devout penant there is no restrication of prescribed and unprescribed flowers in Shiva worship. According to the *Bhakti yoga*, gods can be worshipped with all kinds of flowers.

Those flowers which have fallen on the ground, washed with water, whose fragrance is lost, those of bad smell, those which are not consecrated properly after taking bath and keeping in the hand are not dear to gods.

Those flowers which are of bad smell or smell-less are useless for worshipping. One should neither worship Shiva with stale flowers nor one should worship with flowers full of holes or ruptured parts. Flowers touched by limbs, flowers with less than three petals *i.e.*, not bloomed completely should never be used in the worship of Shiva.

Those flowers except *Shephali* or *Maulsari* (*Minusops elengi*) which are fallen on the ground should be avoided.

The aquatic flowers became stale after five days. Flowers of *Buka* (*Indigofera enneaphylla*) become fit for worship only after seven days. *Padmanilkam* (lotus ; (*Nelumbium* sp.) are good for offering after remaining dry for three days and *Karbir* (*Nerium indicum*) is fit only after one day. Flowers kept in the house of florists can be used for worship.



Shiva linga worshipped with Bel leaves (trifoliate).

32

SACRED LEAVES FOR SHIVA WORSHIP

Not only flowers but leaves of certain plants are sacred for Shiva-worship. It is described in various Sanskrit literaary books that the worshippers of *Shiva linga* with undamaged leaves of Bel or *Belva* (*Aegle marmelos*) get great respect in the domain of Shiva.

The list of the leaves of plants which are considered very sacred for the worship of Lord Shiva is given on page 215, 216.

The most important tree whose leaves are associated with Lord Shiva is Bel or Belva.

BEL OR WOOD-APPLE

Aegle marmelos

Bel (Aegle) and *Belpatra* have been worshipped from the very ancient times. Most popular amongst the trees have been the *Bel* trees in Hindu religion with the assignment of different gods and goddesses to the different parts of the tree. The assignment of *Ishvara* or Lord Shiva to the *Bel* tree has never been an unusual feature.

Bel tree is planted within the area of the house particularly by the side of a temple of Lord Shiva. The Hindus, tinctured with the spirit of devotion, pour down water at the foot of the trees usually after their bath and utter prayers and enchant *mantras*. The corresponding expression for *Bel* in Sanskrit language is '*Shriphala*'. It means the fruit of plenty. It is a

LEAVES SACRED TO LORD SHIVA

Sanskrit	Nepali	Hindi	Botanical Name
1. Belba	Bel	Bel	*Aegle marmelos*
2. Shami	Shami	Chonkar	*Prosopis spicigera*
3. Bhringraj	Bhang, Ganja	Ganja	*Cannabis sativa*
4. Astarush	Asuro	Adusa	*Adhatoda vasica*
5. Kimshukam	Palash	Palash	*Butea monosperma*
6. Cholikam	Suntala	Santara	*Citrus reticulata*
7. Tamal	Siplican	Madvaruna	*Carysta urens* *Crataeva nurvala*
8. Unmattam	Dhaturo	Dhaturo	*Datura stramonium*
9. Krishnala	Ratigodi	Gungeli	*Abrus prectatorius* (Red) *Flueggea leucoprius* (white)
10. Kamal	Kamal	Kamal	*Nelumbium speciosum*
11. Palash	Palash	Dhak	*Butea monosperma*

(*Contd.*)

Sanskrit	Nepali	Hindi	Botanical Name
12. Gandhsara	Shrikhand	Chandan	*Santalum album*
13. Buka	Thulo Maulsari	Banhula	*Indigofera enneaphylla*
14. Gramya	Thulosimi	Vakla	*Dolichos lablab* ; *Phaseolus vulgans*
15. Drona	Gumpati, Gamtephul	Guma, Goma	*Leucas lavandulaefolia*, *L. cephalotes*
16. Apamarga	Chirchida	Chirchiri	*Achyranthes aspera*
17. Khadir	Khayar	Khadir	*Acacia catechu* ; *Uncaria gambhir*
18. Rasala	Ampha	Aam	*Manifera indica*
19. Kinsuka	Palash	Palash, Tesu	*Butea monosperma*
20. Ashokam	Ashoka	Ashoka	*Saraca indica*
21. Duba	Dubo	Dub	*Cynodon dactylon*

Plants and trees have ever been the object of importance and reverence even at the hands of both our revered religious teachers and the physicians.

common belief among the Hindus that the leaves of *Bel* tree are offered to Lord Shiva just to cool and reduce the heat of his body caused by the drinking of poison, the outcome of the churning of the sea. Several devotees write the words 'Rama' on the *Bel* leaves with the sandal paste and offer them to Lord Shiva. It is regarded that this act of devotion and worship bestows extreme virtue on the devotee.

The trifoliate leaves of *Bel* are used in the worship of Lord Shiva. Branch of a tree is also placed near the central pillar of the house during the funeral ceremonies. Post of *Bel* trunk is made according to Hindu rites.

The women folk worship and embrace the *Bel* tree so as to please it to have the materialisation of their keen and long-cherished desires. Solemn and pious devotees of Lord Shiva also tie the leaves to their *shikha* or pig-tails as they think that this pious and sacred act will effortlessly please Lord Shiva. *Bel* tree is never without real and great religious significance. *Bel* tree has been worshipped by all, ranging from the poor belonging to the strata of the society to the monarch belonging to the highest strata of the earth.

The *Bel* tree is cleaned and worshipped with rice and vermilion, and the sacred thread is tied around its trunk and the earthen lamps are lighted at the foot of the tree. It is also worshipped for invocation of Van Durga. Some modification may also be there. *Bel* fruit is also placed in various Hindu worship.

In no way is less the significance of Bel tree in the Kingdom of Nepal, particularly in Kathmandu. The Newar girls of Nepal are married to the *Bel* fruit in their childhood.

The wood of the *Bel* tree is never used as house fuel for fear of incurring the displeasure and indignation of the god of destruction. The sacredness and utility positively contributed to its wide and growing popularity. According to a *Puranic* story, a hunter having lost his way climbed a *Bel* tree in the jungle at night, being apprehensive of danger from the wild animals. Unknowingly and unnoticingly he continued throwing leaves of *Bel* tree throughout the night and below the tree lay the *linga* of Lord Shiva. Thus one, if serves God knowingly or unknowingly, gets salvation and attain enlightenment.

Stories associated with Lord Shiva and Shakti cults are innumerable. Leaves are profusely offered in the worship of Lord Shiva. Branches of *Bel* tree also are worshipped during various ceremonies and festivals. Since the ancient times *Bel* has been associated with phallus worship. Leaves of *Bel* or *Belpatra* are offered to *lingam* of Shiva, especially in the month of *Shravan* (July-August). The worship is done for a protected span of life and for protection from the catalysmic blows if they ever assail a person. Married women worship '*Bel*' tree to seek the best from their husbands. Unmarried girls worship to be united in holy wedlock in time and to have handsome and loving husbands.

There is an interesting story as to why this tree of *Bel* or wood-apple tree became sacred. Lakshmi, the consort of Lord Vishnu, used to worship Lord Shiva regularly with 1000 lotuses. One day the specific and required number ran short of two lotuses. Hence the problem of worship cropped up before her. The specific time of the worship approached and there was no alternative. At the same time, Lord Vishnu casually remarked that her breasts were as beautiful as the blooming lotuses. On hearing it, Lakshmi started cutting her breast with a sharp knife. When she cut one of her breasts. Lord Shiva appeared on the scene and stopped her from doing this. Lord Shiva was overwhelmed with happiness. Detached breast could not be placed on the ground. Lord Shiva blessed her that it would become the sacred fruit, a wood-apple or *Bel*.

Identification of the *Bel* tree with Goddess Lakshmi is still popular. According to the *Agnipurana*, Lakshmi was born in the form of a cow, and from the cow-dung was born the *Bel* tree. '*Sribriksha*', another name of the Bel tree, is suggestive of prosperity and good fortune.

Even the Tantrik version approves the identification of the *Bel* tree with Lakshmi. A legend that Lakshmi had worshipped Lord Shiva for a long time with no success in winning the favour of Lord Shiva, has still been prevalent among the Hindus. After earnest meditation for years, she became a tree, and this tree was none else except the *Bel* tree. Consequently, Lord Shiva's love and liking for this tree is obviously natural and so Lord Shiva is supposed to live under it.

Biologically, this plant belongs to the family *Rutaceae*. It is a medium sized small deciduous tree. Leaves are alternate with 3-5 ovate, lanceolate, lateral, sessile, terminal, long petiolated leaflets. Flowers are bisexual, greenish white in colour, sweet scented arranged in small bunches. Fruit is globose, oblong or pyriform. The colour is greenish or greyish or yellow. *Pulp* is sweet, thick and orange-coloured. The pulp of ripe fruit is sweet and fragrant, cooling and laxative. The pulp of unripe or half ripe fruit possesses power of contracting organic tissues. Root bark of this tree is used in intermittent fevers and also used as fish-poison.

The *drug* prepared from this tree is called *Bel* or *Belae fructus*. It consists of fresh, ripe or half-ripe fruits. It is very useful in chronic diarrhoea and dysentery, especially certain forms of dyspepsia for those who suffer from diarrhoea ; alternating from the pulp of the fruits are useful as soothing agents for patients during convalescence from bacillary dysentery. Pulp also improves appetite and digestion.

The *ripe fruit* is also effective in the early stages of sprue. *Sherbat* or sweet drink prepared with aromatics prevent growth of piles. The fruit is given in the following ways : (1) Extract of the fresh half ripe fruits is also suggested (2) a liquid-extract prepared from sun-dried slices of the unripe fruit is also recommended (3) the powdered dried pulp is given as an antiscorbutic and febrifuge. It is also recommended as nauscent and antidysentric.

The powder is regarded more useful in actual diseases and syrup in chronic diseases.

The *Fresh juice* of *leaves* mixed with honey is given as a mild laxative in fever and catarrh. It is highly effective in asthma. By adding the leaf juice with black pepper, the juice is prescribed in dropsy with constipation and jaundice. The decoction of the *Bel* leaves is administered as a fabrifuge, antibilious and expectorant. The decoction is also recommended in asthma.

Hot poultice of leaves is applied to the head in delirium of fevers and to chest in acute bronchitis. Fresh juice of leaves is also used in opthalmia and other eye diseases.

To increase the seminal fluid a preparation with juice of bark, milk and a little cumin is prescribed. Decoction of root-bark is also given in palpitation of the heart. Decoction of root is administered in intermittent fevers, hyperchondriasis, melancholia and also in palpitation of heart. The decoction of root bark is also given mixed with sugar and fried rice in diarrhoea and gastric irritability in infants.

The great Ayurvedic physician *Charaka*, has advised the use of cot made by *Bel* root for the labour room. It is also a Hindu belief that if preparation of *Bel* roots is taken after enchanting *Shri sukta* of the *Rigveda*, it grants a life of ten thousand years.

Bel is distributed in the Himalayan region of Nepal at about 1200m. The representative collection is available from Eastern Nepal, especially Phusri, Sangari, Bhajang, Dharapani (Kosi Zone and Dhankuta district). It is wild in sub-Himalayan tract, Central and South India.

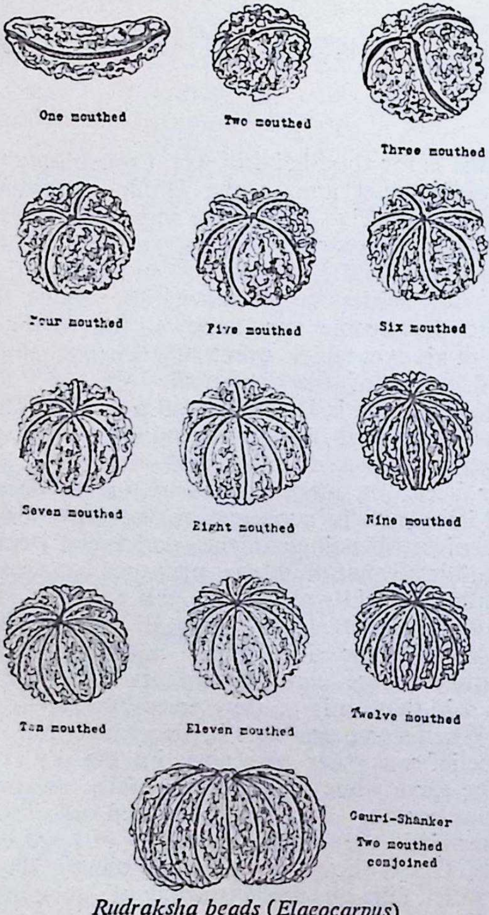
It is quite possible that *bel* tree became associated in the religion owing to its great medicinal properties known to our ascetics living in the Himalayas.

"From the hoary past, the trees and plants have continued to be pregnant with religious and sacred values."

33

RUDRAKSHA---THE HOLY BEADS

Rudraksha is for the Shaivite sect (worshippers of Lord Shiva) a favourite bead among the Hindus. Sometimes it is not unnatural to conceive it as the acorn of a mythological tree, one for making rosary. It is known to have the 'eyes of Lord Rudra or Shiva'. It is said when Lord Shiva defeated demons, all deities sang panegyries about the power of Shiva. Then he became very happy so that tears of happiness shed from his eyes which eventually became *rudraksh* eyes. The botanical name of the *Rudraksha* tree is *Elaeocarpus* while the English name is **Utrasum bead tree**. The importance of certain *rudraksha* seed lies in its number of facets. The furrows which run down on each seed are called its *mukhs* or mouths or faces. A one-faced '*rudrakasha*' is deemed very valuable and its owner is supposed to be really fortunate to enjoy the choicest blessings of the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi, who fulfills all that mundane pleasures can mean. He enjoys all kinds of worldly pleasures open to him. Even by the *darshan* of one-mouthed or furrowed *rudrakasha* people become free from their sins. Such *rudrakshas* are often encased in gold and are carefully preserved in the owner's house. It is said that only a few trees produce one-faced *rudraksha*. When a tree produces it, they are three in number and the belief runs that one goes in the sky, the other vanishes in the earth while the third one falls on the ground for some pious person. Such two one-faced *rudraksha* of this kind are preserved in the inner sanctuary of Lord Pashupati Nath's temple. One is shown to devotees on the day of Bala Chaturdashi which falls on the 14th day of dark moon fortnight in Nov. or early December (*Mangsir*) and on each month on the second day of *Purnima* i.e. bright fortnight. Some *yogis* or saints with spiritual elevation and perfection are also supposed to have got it. The benevolent king of Nepal also possess several one-mouthed *rudrakshas*.



One mouthed
Two mouthed
Three mouthed
Four mouthed
Five mouthed
Six mouthed
Seven mouthed
Eight mouthed
Nine mouthed
Ten mouthed
Eleven mouthed
Twelve mouthed
Gauri-Shanker
Two mouthed
conjoined

Rudraksha beads (*Elaeocarpus*)

Rudraksha seeds having 1 to 32 furrows have been found and reported (Some report that only upto 21 furrowed *rudrakhsa* are found). Five-faced seeds are very common while the other types are uncommon. Two seeds jointed together are called 'Gauri Shanker' and it brings to us the close picture of Goddess Gauri (Parvati) and God Shiva, the major deities of the Hindus. It is a form of *ardhanarishwara*.

The following is the importance and significance of the *rudraksha*.

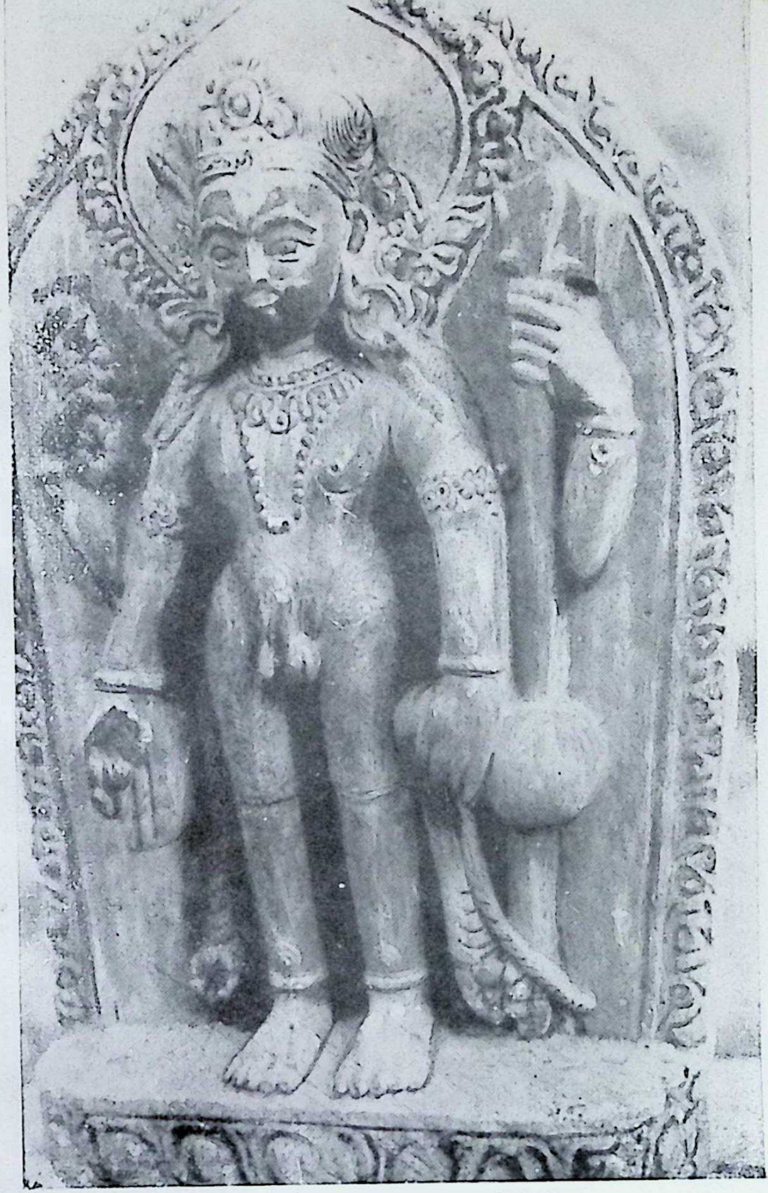
1. One furrowed — *Parambrahma*
2. Two ,, — *Shiva-Shakti*
3. Three ,, — Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh
4. Four ,, — *Chaturanan*
5. Five ,, — Panchamukhi
6. Six ,, — Shivaputra Skanda
7. Seven ,, — Sapta matrika/Sapt Rishi/ Saptashava
8. Eight ,, — Eight idols of Shiva
9. Nine ,, — Nav Durga
10. Ten ,, — *Dasha avtar*
11. Eleven ,, — Akadash Rudra
12. Twelve ,, — Sun/Jyotish vakra
13. Thirteen ,, — Vishwadev
14. Fourteen ,, — Fourth Indra, Bhuvaneshwar
15. More than fourteen — Rudra

The *Shiva Purana* and *Rudraksha Jabal Upanishad* also bear testimony to the fact that much importance is given to *rudraksha*. It is mentioned that *rudraksha* is Lord Shiva himself, and this seed is very dear to Lord Shiva or Rudra. It is very pious and auspicious also. Even by its mere touch, sins take to their heals magically. Its glance or *darshan* is supposed to be so very auspicious that it can neutralise unfortunate happenings if there is any in the store of a man.

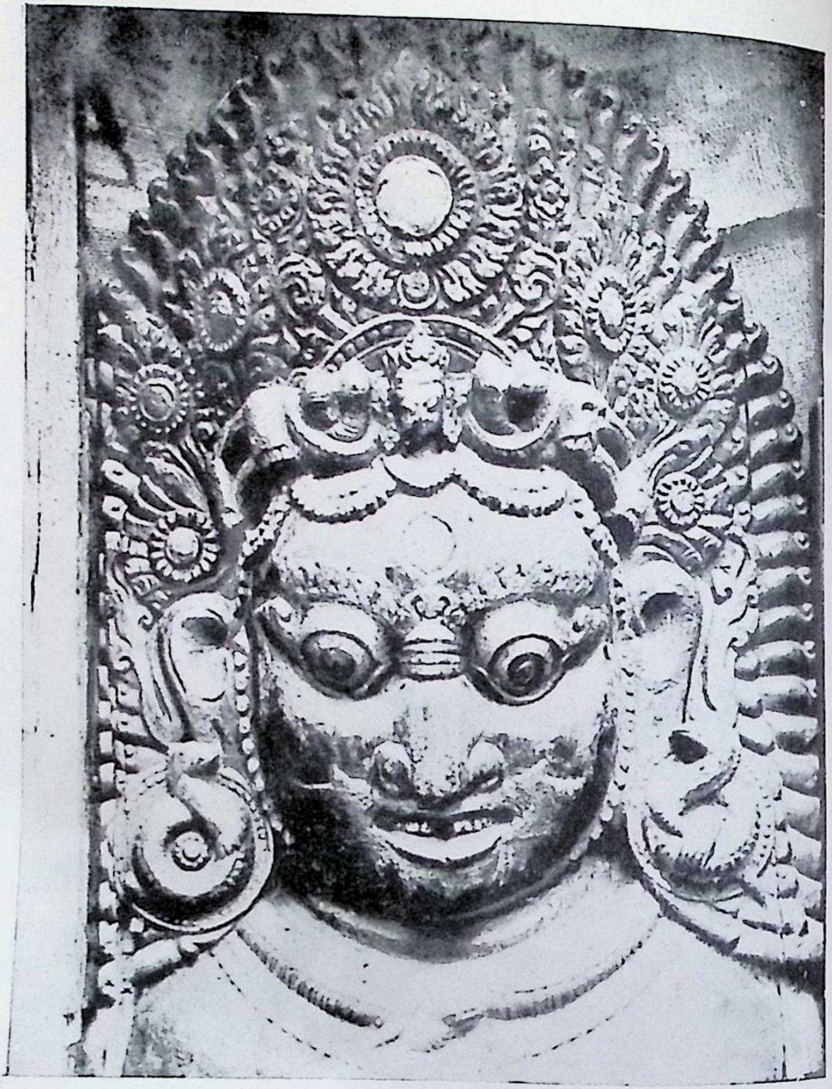
Rudraksha is commonly used to make a rosary, which is a string of beads. This is especially helpful as an aid to the memory and used in religious exercises. It is a convenient method of counting the prayers or repetition of *mantras*. In Sanskrit, it is called *Japmala* or *sumarni*. This serves to compute the daily prayers and promotes contemplation also. Rudraksha-seeds are used to make a rosary which is of either 32 beads or double the number or sometimes, one with 108 or 112 beads.

According to the *Shiva Purana*, *Rudraksha* is of four colours : white, red, yellow and black. Brahmins should wear-white, Kshatriyas-red, Vaishyas-yellow and Sudras black ones. Thus *Rudrakshas* are worn according to the caste based on the *varna* system *i.e.*, castes of the Hindus.

They who want to have salvation as well to enjoy the worldly happiness need wear *rudraksha*. For the worshippers of Shiva or Rudra, it is a must. Wearing of *rudraksha* is very useful for concentration and peace of mind, spiritual achievement, awakining of *Kundalni*, control over action etc. Wearing of two-mouthed *rudraksha* is boon giving, three-mouthed *rudrakash* especially helps for attaining education and wealth. Four-mouthed is Brahma. Those who wear four-mouthed, achieved *dharma*, (religion), *artha* (wealth), *Kama* (pleasures) and *moksha* (liberation'. Specially advantageous to those whose momory is weak, power of speech is poor and intelligence is low. Five-mouthed is Shiva itself. Those who wear this type of *rudraksha* never suffers from miseries and troubles. Atleast three five-mouthed *rudrakasha* should be worn. Six-mouthed is God Kumar or Ganesh. This is especially advantageous for education and business. Especially good for women who suffer from hysteria, epilesly etc. Seven-mouthed rudrakash is Anang Deva or seven mother or seven *Rishis*. Those who wear it become free from disease. He gets name and fame. Eight-mouthed is form of Ganesh/ Vatuk Bhairava. This is especially advantageous for attaining long life. Those who wear it can not speak lie. Nine-furrowed is the form of Durga/Dharmraj. Those who wear it become fearless even from Yamraj. It should be worn around neck. If the following *mantra* of Durga *Om Hin Dun Durgaye Nama* is enchanted one million time impossible thing become possible. One can conquer even the enemy. Ten-mouthed is the form of Janardan. Those who wear it their all acts become possible.



Kamdeva, one of the form of Shiva.



Bhairabh, a form of Shiva.

He can not be killed or destroyed by others. By wearing it bad planets do not harm. Ten-mouthed is helpful for long life free from troubles and miseries. Eleven-mouthed is of mixed form or Indra. This is advantageous for conquering. It should be tied in top knot of head. Especially good for women, those who wear it their husbands achieve long life. Twelve-mouthed is Vishnu himself or Surya. If it is worn on top knot, one becomes free from diseases. This is especially helpful for getting employment. Thirteen-mouthed is boon giving. By wearing it one gets name, fame and wealth If woman wears it she is blessed with progeny. It is also wish fullfilling. Fourteen-mouthed originated from eyes of Lord Shiva. It is a form of Hanuman. It is to be worn on fore head. It is very rare. It ends all miseries and trouble. Gauri Shankar is mixed form. It should be kept in house. It is specially helpful for getting *siddhi* and wish fulfilment. It is next substitute of one-mouthed *rudraksha*.

If *rudrakasha* is worn and special mantras are enchanted then every thing can be achieved. But it should be worn with faith and devotion.

Further it is mentioned in the *Shiva Purana* that good *rudrakshas* are of the size of the fruit of *Amla* (*Phyllanthus*) while the medium is that of Ber (*Zizyphys*). The *rudrakshas* of the size of a gram are very effective. Those which are of the size of 'ber' bestow prosperity. *Rudraksha* of the size of '*Amla*' fruit offsets calamities, disasters and misfortunes. It helps one to have control over his senses and gives him tranquility or bliss. The *rudraksha* of the size of the fruit of a '*ratti*' (*Abrus*) i.e., about the weight of eight grains of rice, fulfills all the desires and wishes of the possessor. When the seed of *rudraksha* is small, it is more beneficial and effective. True *rudraksha* seed will never float on water. *Rudraksha*, if worn, helps a man in purgation of his sins. Therefore, those who want salvation generally wear it. Proportionate, tubercled, lubricous, hard *rudrakshas* make even the unattainable desires attainable. Those *rudraksha* seeds which are insect-eaten or are damaged, or without tubercles, unround, without colour, disproportionate, etc. should not be used. *Rudrakshas* with central holes in them are regarded superb and excellent. But seeds with man-made holes are of medium quality. Even great sins also get wiped out on wearing *rudraksha*.

It is further described in the *Shiva Purana* that those who wear 1100 *rudrakshas* become 'Rudras' themselves. The effect of wearing 1100 *rudrakshas* cannot be described even in one hundred years. Those who wear 550 *rudrakshas* are superb or supreme. Those who wear 308 are staunch devotees. However, even the wearing of one seed or a few seeds is quite effective if they touch the body.

The method of wearing *rudrakshas* has also been described in the *Shiva Purana*. Three are to be worn on the top-knot of the head, six on each arm, 101 around the neck, 11 on each wrist, three in sacred thread and five in the waist. Those who wear *rudraksha* in this fashion take the form of Lord 'Shiva' themselves and deserve to be prayed. Even those who have *darshan* of such saints or ascetics are also liberated from various sins.

If it is not possible to wear 1100 seeds, there is an alternative, too. This is to wear one round the top-knot of hair (*sikha*), 30 on the head, 50 around the neck, 17 on each arm, 12 on the wrist, 500 in the waist region and 108 on the sacred thread. In this way, those who wear *rudrakshas* acquire themselves the characteristics of Rudra and even the deities pray to them. Those who wear one on the top-knot of head, 40 on head, 32 around neck and 108 on chest, 6 in each ear, 16 on each arm, 12 or 24 on each hand are regarded as great devotees of Lord Shiva.

The wearing of *rudrasha* should be followed by the recitation of *mantras*. While wearing on the head *Ishan Mantras* should be recited, wearing on the neck and the chest, *Aghor Mantras*, wearing on ears-*Tatpursh Mantra*, on hands-*Aghor Mantra* and *Big Mantra* on the waist and 15 rudraksha with *Vamdev Mantra* should be followed. With recitation of *Sadjat Mantra* on other parts, three, five or seven rosaries should be worn or all the '*rudrakshas*' should be worn with *Mool Mantra*. Those who wear *rudraksha* should not take wine, meat, garlic, onion, *Spendius* (Laphsi) etc.

However, it is suggested that a few seeds of 11 facets *rudrakshas* should be worn touching the body. Married persons should wear one or two seeds with two facets. Those who are worshippers of Hanuman should wear seeds with five furrows.

Quality *rudraksha* can be obtained only with great pious efforts. Those who do not care for it make their way to the Nether world. *Rudraksha* can be worn by people irrespective of age, caste and sex. It is a must for the ascetics and saints. By wearing *rudraksha* sins are completely washed away. Even Yamas, the agents or *doots* of the god of death, do not bring those who have this seed on them to *Narak* (nether world). Remembering and repeating sacred names on the rosary of *rudrakasha* have the virtues of one hundred million. One always remains healthy and will never be a victim of untimely death. Even those who are the worshippers of Lord Vishnu can wear it. The demons, ghosts and other destructive forces will not harm the wearer of the *rudraksha* seeds.

Gods like Shiva, Vishnu, Ganesh, Durga Sun, Yama and other deities become exceedingly pleased with a person wearing *rudraksha*. Rudraksha has the power to bestow wealth and riches and fulfill all human desires. Those who wear it are blessed with enough sons and grandsons to bear the family name according to religious scriptures.

Rudraksha is mainly used for worshipping Rudra. There is a story about the origin of Rudra in the *Vishnu Purana*. In the beginning of *Kalpa*, Brahma proposed to create a son of purple complexion. The boy was born and he started crying. The great creator wanted to know why he was weeping. He asked for a name. Then Brahma named him 'Rudra'. Again he wept and then again Brahma gave him many other names, like, Rudra, Bhava, Sarva, Isana, Pashupati, Bhim, Ugra and Janadeva.

Rud in Sanskrit stands for crying. This deity is regarded as great in Hindu religion. In the *Rigveda*, he has been mentioned as of braided hair, possessing beautiful lips, firm limbs, brown colour and multi-forms. He was radiant and bright. The *Yajur Veda* and the *Atharva Veda* describe more of his features. According to the *Atharva Veda*, the belly of

Rudra is of blue complexion, his back is red, neck is also blue ; this treatise also describes his mouth and teeth. *Yajur Veda* describes him copper-complexioned and red. His neck is blue-black and his throat white.

Rudra wields the lightning and the thunderbolt. He is regarded as destructive and ruddy. He is mentioned as wise, beneficial, bountiful, auspicious and of easy invocation. He is also regarded as god of rains and healing wounds. In some of the *Samhitas* and *Brahmanas* he is worshipped for the welfare and multiplicity of cattle and he is also the Lord of cattle. He is invoked to help his escape from the celestial fire and the catastrophic fall of the lightning.

Rudra is said in the *Atharva Veda* as he attacks on the adversaries with fever, cough and poison. There is a list of names given to this deity in the *Brahmanas*. In the *Aitareya Brahmana*, his origin is traced to the evil eye of Prajapati on his daughter itself. However, other scriptures do not mention it.

Offerings to Rudra are made in the places where snakes live or at a mound of manure and in waters. Rudra has got complete control over all the animates, and he always lives in the North. Rudra is *Mahesha* or Great God. Some scholars identify the deity in the howling of the storm. Rudra is considered to be the deity of hot season from Summer to Autumn. Some scholars believe that Rudra is simply the elevation to the rank of a high god or the chief of souls of the dead. Some authors consider him as the gods of mountains and jungles. Mountains of Nepal are always associated with Rudra as the Vedic saints always regarded the mountains of Nepal of great importance.

Rudra represents the principles of life. Rudra is worshipped for the removal of signs of death and prevent the withering of the body. Rudra is also the god of atmosphere. Rudra is regarded to be a transmuted form of god. Rudra is connected with the heaven, air and earth. Some of his characteristics come from the god of death or Yama. The *Yajur Veda* regards him as the lord of orgastic dance. The worship of Rudra gives virile power. Rudra-mantra means, "*Aum*, we worship the three-eyed Lord, fragrant, giver of strength, who librates one from death. May He make us free from the bonds of death."

Worship of Rudra gives life energies. "Rudras are principles of life intermediary between unconscious, physical elements and intellect, between the earthly sphere and the sphere of the sun." The *Chandogya Upanishad* says that Rudra means howl or red one or cause of tears. "Verily the vital breaths are cause of tears for (on departing) they cause everyone to lament".

The *Brahad Aranyak Upanishad* mentions "When they leave their mortal body, they make us cry and because that cause tears (*rud*) therefore, called Rudra or Rudras." The *Satpatha Brahmana* says that Rudra, the prince is one, while countless craftsmen the Rudras are his subjects.

Rudra is also the counterpart of Kali, the power of destruction. He is the fierce active manifest personification of destruction. Shiva is the name given to the transcendent peaceful aspects.

In the '*Rigveda*' Rudra is spoken as the Lord of song, Lord of sacrifices and the doer of welfare to the cattle, men and women. He is regarded as the giver of nourishment and he drives away sins also. In the *Athrava Veda*, too, Rudra occurs as the protector of cattle. The origin of 'Rudra' is described in the *Padam Purana*, the *Kurm Purana* and the *Vishnu Purana* also. Rudra also means the remover of pain. *Rut* is the name given to the three forms of pains which are physical, mental and spiritual.

The *Vishnu Sahasra-nama* says that at the time of destruction Rudra destroys all the living beings and makes them cry. Hence, he is the 'Lord of Tears' also.

It is regarded that this world is governed by fear, and Rudra is the great fear, the great thunderbolt, whose anger in war even the gods fear. The *Taittirya Upanishad* says "Out of fear of Him the wind blows, out of fear the sun shines, out of fear, fire and the king of heaven and death rush to work. The anger of divinity is the source of fear". The lord of fire or Agni is also a manifestation of Rudra. In his destructive aspect, Rudra takes the form of Bhairava who relishes in destruction.

The *Aitareya Brahmana* says that Rudra is the lord of elements and lord of ghosts. In the *Mahabharata* also, it is mentioned that Rudra sweeps away all beings. He is the lord of slumber. Rudra is **Hari** also the remover or giver of wonders. In the *Vedas*, Rudra is also applied to Shiva or the auspicious one. Rudra is the transcendent divinity, the lord of knowledge. Rudra is the lord of **Yoga** also. He is **Shankara**, the giver of joy, **Shambu** the abode of joy.

In the *Tantric* worship, it is mentioned that Rudra has shown in the left-hand doctrine that spiritual advancement is best achieved by means of those very things which are the causes of man's downfall. This is also described in *Kularnava Tantra*. Thus the Lord or great god is invoked by remembering and repeating mantras on the *Rudraksha*-rosary.

The *Rudraksha* is the seed of the tree, genus *Elaeocarpus*, family *Elaecarpaceae*. This tree is not without interesting features. Its leaves are simple, serrulate and petiolate. Flowers are hermaphrodite, found in axillary racemoses about 12 mm in diameter and white in colour. The flowering takes place in the rainy season and fruits are found in months of November and December. The fruit is a drupe, globose, purple, tubercled, grooved, distributed in subtropical regions. Over 300 species of *Elaeocarpus* have been reported so far. They are found in Nepal, India, China, Australia, Newzealand, Java, Polynesia, Mauritius, Socotra etc. In Nepal, good variety of plants are found in Rudra-runda area in Dingala of Bhojpur district in Arun valley area.

Apart from the sanctity attached to them they do have medicinal value as well, which run as follows :

The most common species of them are six.

1. *Elaeocarpus floribundus*

Infusion of bark and leaves used as mouth-wash for inflamed gum. Found in the Eastern Himalaya and Assam.

2. *E. giganitrus=E sphaericus*

This fruit is used in the diseases of head and epileptic fits. Found in Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Bombay and Nepal; sometimes, it is cultivated as an ornamental tree also. This species is found in Eastern Nepal upto 1200m. Representative collection is from Dhankuta, Kosi Zone.

3. *E oblongus*

Fruit used in emetic, also in rheumatism, pneumonia, ulcers, leprosy, dropsy and piles. Found in Western Ghat (India) up to 1800 m. altitude.

4. *E petiolatus*

Juice of leaves is used in malaria as an application in fever. Found in Assam.

5. *E. serratus*

Leaves used in rheumatism. Antidote to poison. Fruit used in dysentery and diarrhoea. The fruit has citric acid, its leaves contain vitamin 'C' and seeds a fixed oil. Found in Eastern Himalaya upto 900 m. Evergreen forests of North Kanara and Wastern Coast down to Travancore in India.

6. *E. tuberculatus*

Decoction of the bark is used as remedy for rheumatism, indigestion and bilousness. Nuts used as remedy for rheumatism, typhoid fever and epilepsy. From Kanara southwards through Western Ghats, Coorg, Mysore and Travancore and common in Nilgiris, Palni and Annamali hills.

All kinds of *rudrakashas* are commonly used in the Ayurvedic medicines. When any one suffers from smallpox or chicken pox, the seed or fruit is rubbed on a clean stone and the paste is given to the patient to eat. It is also helpful for prevention of poxes. It is also believed that those who wear *rudraksha* do not suffer from blood-pressure, and according to some physicians this fact bears mention in Ayurvedic medicine.

Suggestions for wearing Rudrakasha

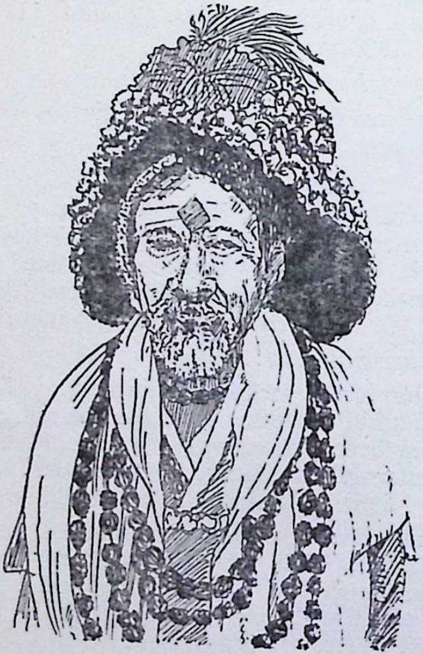
1. Only those *rudrakashas* are effective which are touched by the *linga* of Pashupatinath.

2. Rudraksha should be washed in the holy waters of the Bagmati or Ganga or milk.

3. When it is wore one should enchant the mantra '*Om Nama Shivaya*.'

4. Rosary to be wear should be either in red thread or thread of silver or gold.

5. One should always wear Rudrakasha rosary even at the time of eclipses.



A Nepalese saint with head-gear, coat and rosary of Rudrakasha seeds

6. It should be worshipped daily. He achieves the wealth.

7. Those who wear rosary of 108 *rudrakasha* achieve fruits of *Ashwamedha yajna*.

10. Those who wear *rudrakasha* should also enchant *Durga-Chalisha*, *Shiva-Strotam*, *Hanuman-Chalisha*. The effect is greatly enhanced.

11. For salvation *rudrakasha* rosary of 100 beads should be worn, for beauty, and health rosary should be of 140 beads, For wish fulfillment it should be 32 beads. For boons it should be 108 beads, for enchanting mantras or *Jap*, rosary should be of 108 beads. For counting and enchanting rosary or *sumerani* should be 54 or 28 beads.

12. Any body can wear rosary of *rudrakasha* irrespective of caste, creed, and sex.

13. *Rudrakasha* rosary of small beads should be used for *Japs* while big beads of *rudrakasha* are specially helpful for diseases.

Medicinal Use of Rudrakasha

Rudrakasha is of great medicinal use. As already, said various gods viz., Shiva, Vishnu, Ganesh, Durga, Yam become happy with the wearer of the rosary of *rudrakasha*. Ghosts, devils, dakinis become fearful of the person having *rudrakasha*. The wearer of *rudrakasha* rosary achieve *dharma*, *aratha*, *kama*, *moksha*. Wearing of *rudrakasha* is especially helpful for those who suffer from high blood pressure.

If ten-mouthed *rudrakasha* bead is rubbed with milk and its paste is eaten then old cough is cured. Six-mouthed *rudrakasha* specially cures hysteria, epilepsy etc. If the four-mouthed rudraksha is boiled in milk which is drink for twenty days all the brain diseases are cured.

Rudrakasha absorbs extra heat of the body. Rudrakasha is good for diseases of high blood pressure.

34

PLANTS FAVOURITES OF SHIVA

There are several plants associated with Lord Shiva. Shiva is the only God in the Hindu Pantheon who was addicted to smoking or taking hemp. Important of them are two :

(1) Marijuana (*Cannabis sativa*). Out of which *Bhang*, *Ganja* and *Charas* are prepared.

(2) *Dhatura* (*Dhatura stramonium*)

Cannabis has got several names such as marijuana, *bhang*, *ganja*, *charas*, *hashish*, subzee, Vijaya, hemp, pot, grass, unmattini, Siddhi, Shivapriya, Chapla, Harshini weed. These names are also either the name of *Cannabis* or the products of *Cannabis*. There is a lot of confusion about the nomenclature and many a botanist confuse one with the other. However, the following description is accepted by a majority of scientists and scholars of ancient literature.

Cannabis (Marijuana) or True Hemp

Bhang—Dried leaves and flowers of *Cannabis*.

Ganja—Dried pistilate flowers coated with resinous secretion. (*i.e.*, yield of male plant).

Charas (*Hashish*)—Pure resinous exude gathered from leaves and flowering tops of the plants.

BHANG OR TRUE HEMP

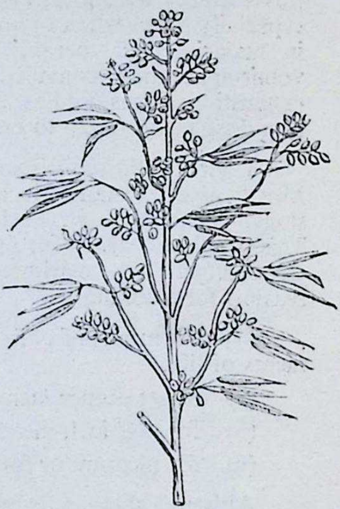
Cannabis sativa=*C. indica*

It is said that Lord Shiva, found the *Bhang* plant, a choice plant. Therefore, it is also called *Shivabooti*. So the

Hindu devotees called him '*Bhangeri Baba*' *i.e.*, the god who is given to the enjoyment of *Bhang* and is often under the impact of *Bhang* and consequently in the oblivious state of the outer surroundings. So the devotees also like the plant and enjoy the drink from its dried seeds. And one can come across a large number of ascetics who take to the habit of eating or smoking it.

This plant belongs to the family *Cannabinaceae*. It is a small, erect herb. Its leaves are palmate, alternate or opposite and stalked. Its flowers are pale, yellow green, and unisexual. Male and female are separate and dissimilar plants. Male flowers are clustered while the female ones are auxiliary.

Medicinally too, it is of great importance. It serves as a remedy for malaria, black water fever and blood poisoning. Its leaves are sedative, anodyne, narcotic, anti-spasmodic, diuretic, digestive, and astringent and are used to care diarrhoea and dysentery. It induces sleep. It is also used in tetanus and for relieving pain. The leaves are boiled before they are used. Apart from these uses, they are also externally used for removing dandruff and vermin, pain in the ear, for dressing fresh wounds and sores. Poultice of fresh leaves is used in piles and orchitis.



Plant of Cannabis sativa

Bhang is the cheapest and least potetent preparation made from dried leaves and flowers of both male and female plants. It is prescribed in dyspepsia, gonorrhoea, bowel complaints, and also as an appetizer and nerving stimulant. It is prescribed in a small dose of one-fourth to two grains only.

Ganja is the dried pistillate flowering top of the cultivated plant which is coated with a resinous secretion. It has only Cannabinol. Ganja-smoke is drawn into the mouth. It is very useful for inducing sleep among those who suffer from hallucinations. It is locally applied to relieve pain in eczema, pruritis, etc. It is prescribed in very small doses of one fourth to two grains.

Charas is the pure resinous exudate which gathers on the leaves and flowering tops of plants. It is a valuable narcotic, especially given when opium cannot be permitted. It is useful in malarial and periodical headache, anaemia, nervous vomiting, tetanus, convulsion, insanity, delirium, and nervous exhaustion. It is used as aphrodisiac also and is prescribed in a dose of one sixth to one fourth grain.

Charas or *Hashish* is smoked through a small clay pipe. Mostly asceties smoke it and in each puff they shout the slogan '*Bam Shankar*'. It is regarded as a blissful reverie. This ritual has existed for millions of years virtually without any change. The marijuana smokers give the following reasons for smoking :

(1) as a means of oblivion or for escaping the disillusionments of life,

(2) to get deeper mental and spiritual insight,

(3) for physical, mental and emotional relaxation,

(4) for pleasure or for kicks.

Although they are banned, these drugs are still commonly used as sexual stimulants. The ascetics and saints use these drugs in small quantity to remove fatigue, to have freshness, to pick up their low spirits and to help open up different areas of reality to perception and awarness. It is also proved that the instant use of marijuana is helpful in the attainment of Bramacharya, the sublimation of sexual energies and in acquiring a higher state of consciousness. However, all these drugs are habit-forming and the excess of these drugs causes delirium. Pulse-rate at first increases but afterwards decreases.

Thus, all these three preparations are parts of one plant cultivated, especially in Western Nepal and India.

Marijuana has been widely used in the traditional Ayurvedic system of medicine. Recently, it has been introduced in western medicines also. The first record of its use is probably by the doctors of Napoleons in Egypt. It was used as sedative and for its painkilling properties. A western doctor named O'shaughnessy (1839) described its medicinal preparation as therapeutic, religious and recreational. He also reported that marijuana is of great medicinal value, especially in tetanus, epilepsy, rheumatism and alleviation of wrenching muscle, spasm and rabies.

In 1860, the Ohio State Medical Society (USA) reported the successful use of marijuana in the treatment of conditions such as stomach pain, child birth, psychosis, chronic cough, gonorrhoea, local nerve pains and inflammatory pains. Since then the use of marijuana has grown up. The use of it is prescribed in appetite, stimulation, tropical anesthesia, treatments of insomnia, nerve pains, migraine, asthena, glaucoma, neurosis, anxiety, depressions etc. Marijuana can be used as withdrawal agent for alcohol and other drugs. Several researchers and physicians have suggested an investigation into its short and long term effects.

The active drug from marijuana is T.H.C (delta-9-tetra hydrocannabinol) which serves to relieve nausea caused by anticancer drugs and irridation. Some of its characteristic properties are enumerated as mood-elevator, tranquilizer, appetite stimulant and mild anti-depressant.

The long and short term effect of marijuana is reported by Indian ascetics. In initial stages it is stimulant, aphrodisiac, relaxing, and reducing inhibitions. In long term it affects the users, sexual centres of brain and decreases desires and passions. In every case, it has been reported, the discontinuation of *marijuana* led to normal sexual function.

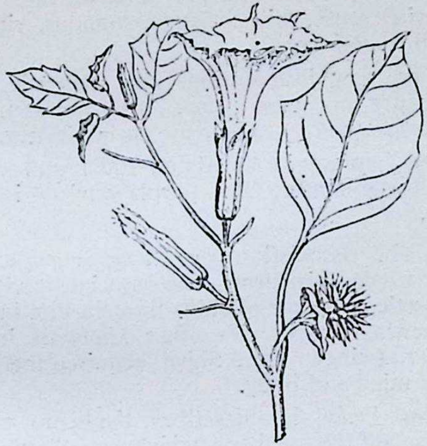
The use of marijuana over a long period cuts the channels of sexuality so that nerves exciting the physical centres in the brain becomes defunct. This energy otherwise used can be channelised in the higher psychic centres of the body. It seems, it is precisely for this reason that the spiritual aspirants desirous of controlling sex-pursuence of spiritual happiness smoke *marijuana*. Their sexual appetite is dulled which helps them to divert their mind to happiness interms of the absence of desires and anxieties. Marijuana is the holiest plant sacred to Lord Shiva. The slogen of "*Bam Shankar*" that often goes with its smoking is a call to Shiva. The Lord of *yogis* or ascetics remains always in a state of eternai bliss, with eyes in *unmani mudra*. The relation between *marijuana* and higher consciousness is well-known. The smoking of *charas* helps to have a vision which pierces the veil of ignorance, opens the doorway to the future, and plays a role in transformation of human consciousness. For relaxation and peace of mind, the use of marijuana is widely acknowledged. However, in no case, should it be used indiscriminately. Scientifically, it can be interpreted that for harmony and peace there is need of its use so that the two parts of the brain, the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems are balanced.

The smoking of marijuana is, however, hazardous. It adversely affects the lungs. Therefore, its heavy use may be dangerous. However, *Nepali Nigantu*, an authoritative Ayurvedic treatise, mentions that it cures cough and gas troubles.

DHATURA

Datura stramonium

In worship, gods have their own preferences. Lord Shiva is worshipped with flowers of *Dhatura* or *Kaner* (*Nerium indicum*) and the leaves of *bel tree*. In old Sanskrit literature the plant is referred to as '*Shiva Shekhara*' owing to its association with Lord Shiva to whom it is a favourite plant. That is why devotees of Lord Shiva have found it pleasant. They eat its seed.



Dhatura ; *Lord Shiva is worshipped wiih the flowers of it.*

It is wrong to assume that several plants, worshipped in the religious world, are without any medicinal properties in them. In case of high fever, *Dhatura* is used for treatment. The witch-doctor or physician goes near the plant at twilight and places a few grains of rice and lights an earthen lamp filled with *ghiu i.e.*, clarified butter. Prayer is made to the plant to lend its leaves for the medicine value it has. Early in the morning some leaves are picked and their juice is administered to the patient.

This plant belongs to the family of *Solenacae* and it is bushy upto 1m. high. Leaves are large, ovate, toothed. Its flowers are large and white in colour. Its fruit is ovoid deeply divided into four, covered with long or short thorns.

Various parts possess medicinal properties. The dry leaves, flowers and seeds of the plants are used for their therapeutic value. The drug, *Hyoscyamine* used as *Belladonna* or *Hyoscyamus* is the principal property in the leaves. The drug is also prescribed in bronchitis or antispasmodic and narcotic. The inhalation of smoke from burning leaves is good for relieving asthma. Seeds are used for relief of pain caused by decaying teeth, piles, fistula, tumour, ring-worm, skin disease and leucoderma.

The seeds are very intoxicating, and narcotic and are anodyne. They are poisonous also. The seeds are added with *Bhang* (*Cannabis sativa*) to increase their potency.

This plant is common in Nepal and India and especially grows in the waste lands. The purple variety is of more medicinal value.

Regarding the association or *bhang* or *ganja*, it is not known exactly when this drug was associated with Shiva. Probably the ascetic character of Shiva brought him in habit of smoking and chewing hemp with other kinds of intoxicant like *soma** or *sura* (wine). Lord Shiva acquired the habit for concentration of mind and body.

The *Artharva Veda* also describes the hemp plant as a sacred grass as one of the five herbs which are offered in oblations. These are *soma*, *kusha*, *bhanga*, *java*, and *saha*. Bhang is mentioned as a medicine in *Shusruta* before 8th century A.D. It is described as antiphlegmatic. It is mentioned that in the 10th century the intoxicating nature of *Bhang* was known.

According to the *Puranas*, Shiva became addicted to drinking as a result of curse inflicted on him by Daksha. Shiva is described as the god of eight *siddhis* and is also called Siddhideva.

Shivas addiction of hemp is very interestingly described in Medieval Hindu literature. Sarkar (1974) aptly writes, "When god goes to marry, he has to remain as per marriage custom, on fast for a long time and during this period he is impatient to take hemp". The condition after taking hemp is described as follows, "The god's eyes have become drowsy and his behaviour shows that he is tipsy. The tiger-skin worn by him, drops down and the garland of bones is deranged. Being under intoxication, the god forgets to take his drum, the horn flute, the bow and the trident. With no reason whatsoever, he laughs at intervals and calls out Nandi with half-chocked voice to bring *nakula* (usually taken after drinking *siddhi*)". Some authors point out that Shiva was taking hemp as he was leading the life of an ascetic. Gauri was knowing that her husband was in the habit of chewing and smoking hemps. Thus Shiva lived on *bhang* and *dhatura*. These trees are considered by some as symbols of renunciation, by others as god's magnanimity. *Siddhi* is considered as bhang, and ganja. Dhatura, as already said is also one of the great favourite of Shiva.

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*Beverage prepared from Ascleepias acida wbich grows abundantly on mountains of Nepal, India and Persia.

In the literature, it is also described *dhatura* and *sidhi* are so much favoured by god that he who worships him with these drugs with a sincere heart, gets his desire fulfilled instantly.

"Nothing is intrinsically good or evil, but its manner of usage makes it."

35

SNAKES—FAVOURITES OF SHIVA

Snakes are the favourites of Lord Shiva and they are associated with him in several ways. There is a great symbolical significance of snakes. Snakes are also associated with Vishnu, Krishna and several other gods and semi-gods. In Brahmanism, Snakes have also played a very important part in other religions viz., Buddhism and Jainism. In the *Rigveda*, the serpent has also been designated as *Ahi-budhnya*. Macdonell (1963) is of opinion that *ahi-budhnya* and *ahi- vrtra* are the same.

Snakes are also called *nagas* and by this word some serpent-demons are also designated. Some dynasties are also associated with the *naga-clan*. There are also several Hindu tribes, which worship *nagas*. In the post-Vedic period, the snake was associated with Shiva. Naga-worship is related to water. The word *naga* stands for a cobra which is not at all associated with water as it is a terrestrial species. Snakes move in a zigzag way and hence they resemble the flow of a river, and as such snakes are associated with water.

In early vedic period, snakes are refered to as *ahis or vatas*.

Snakes are regarded as a symbol of fertility and as the sign of fecundity in womanhood. Vogel (1926) writes that in view of the fact that snakes come out of their burrows with the onset of the rainy season and are associated with some magic power, they are called *nagas*.

In Shaivism, Shiva is shown with hooded-cobras round his neck. The Aryan god, Rudra-Shiva, designated as Pashupati, also has cobras. Bhandarkar (1965) mentions that *pati* or the lord is the master of animals including snakes which lives in open fields, forests and waste lands, which are away from human habitations.

The role of the snake associated with Lord Shiva in the descent of the Ganges is also depicted in several places. Zimmer (1965) describes it in a very interesting way, "A giant king of snakes covered by torrent is moving upwards, his powerful body undulating with slow movements and shielded by the halo of snake-heads and hoods. He greets the water with rapt devotion and with a sense of exhilaration. He is followed by a snake queen in a similar attitude of *bhakti* (devotion), devout rapture and pious bliss. Beneath it there is a giant animal shaped as a serpent-genius lifting its body...".

It is also described that worship of a snake which is a venomous reptile must have been associated with terror. This view has also been endorsed in the *Ramayana*.

Among the pests that infest Nepal and India snakes are the most dreaded. Dubois (1959) apty writes, snake worship which is a common form of idolatory among almost every heathen nation, no doubt owes its origin to men's natural fears of these reptiles". Hindus propitiate the poisonous species with offerings and sacrifices. Some scholars say that Hindus worship the enemies also owing to the extreme tender heartedness or to the gentle and compassionate natures.

The serpent is also regarded as a symbol of life and love. There is a transformation of the terrible aspect of reptile to that of the benevolent one.

The significance of snakes as having the sexual significance is due to phalloid resemblance and its connection with water as life-giving force.

It is also a popular belief that when a woman sees a moving snake in a dream, she conceives. This belief is due to the confusion that the word *naga* means both serpent and elephant. The symbol of snake represents both dread and attraction. It unites the productive and destructive aspects of nature.

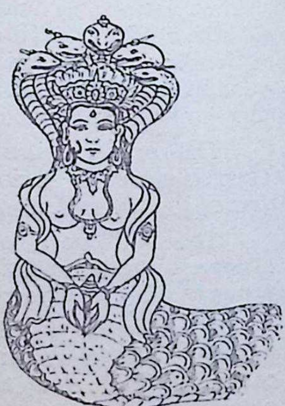
Snakes are associated with female deities also as they represent both life-giving and death-dealing organ of the primordial mother in the terrible forms. Snake is regarded to be a fertility symbol as it represents both male and female symbols in the pattern of serpent-pair.

Sometimes, *nagalkals*, in the form of serpents are adherent gifts for women deserving offspring. Sometimes, snake queen of mermaid type with a serpent-tail and human body with the composition of expanded cobra-hood is represented in the reliefs. Sometimes, one snake is depicted with a number of heads and expanded hoods. In some, serpent-pairs are shown with heads facing each other entwined in embrace. The entwined snakes are regarded as symbol of some profession. Entwined snakes are beutifully represented on the struts of Vasuki Nath Temple in Pashupati Nath area.

Nagas inhabit sub-aquatic paradises at the bottoms of rivers, lakes and seas, having gems and pearls. Zimmer (1965) describes that snakes are regarded as keepers of the life-energy which is stored in the earthly waters of the springs, wells and ponds. They are also considered guardians of the deep sea.

It is also said that snakes carry a precious jewel in their heads called *nagmani*. There is one *nagmani* in the treasury of Lord Pashupatinath. Another significance of *nagas* is that of 'door guardian' or *dwarapala*. Therefore, these are depicted on the sanctum-walls of Hindu and Buddhist shrines. They represent pious devotion fervent-feeling with concentration of the inward vision of god.

Serpents are also regarded to be of tenacious vitality because they rejuvenate themselves by sloughing off their skins. Snakes are also used as decoration and ornaments by Shiva.

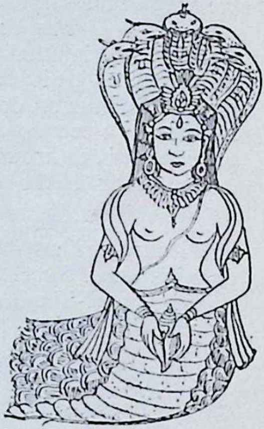


Nagabandh, with a canopy of snake, and conch shell, (Male).

In Hinduism, as Lord Shiva is especially the deity of destruction, he has adopted the terrific and poisonous animals as his *ganas* (attendants). Snakes, being the venomous reptiles, got associated with this deity. We also find frequent examples of snakes being sent out to kill certain evil spirits whom the god or his devotees want to be destroyed.

The snake's hood generally form the canopy of the powerful celestials like Vishnu and the Hindu kings who are his incarnations. Cobra-hoods stand for the superhuman power of kings.

In Nepal, we find the canopy of the snake-hoods, the celestial parasol above the head of the kings in the case of Malla dynsaty and Shah dynasty (our rulers in the temples of Pashupati Nath and Guheswari Devi). The canopy is sometimes of a snake or snakes and the central image exhibits the dynasty of a royal personage. Sometimes, along with a large canopy the smaller statues has also its own canopy. There may be both impact and significance of this. One of them is that the king is incarnation of the divine ruler and if any one who disturbs the divine-grace will have the attack of the snake's poisonous prongs. Secondly, the chronicals of Nepal say that this valley was once an abode of the snakes who lived in the lake of Kathmandu Valley before cutting open the Chaubar-pass and draining away the waters of *Nagahird*. This indicates that snakes are associated with aborigines. We can presume that, before the advent of the *Puranic* civilization, this valley was the abode of the aborigines only. Snakes and *Nagahird* have some historical value in the ancient history of Nepal.



Nagbandh with a *canopy of snake* (Female).

Vishnu reposes on the coils of a prodigious snake, his favourite symbolic animal known as *ananta* i.e., endless. The snake of Vishnu is very famous. Vishnu is asleep after the cessation of the creation. He is represented relaxing on the back of a thousand-headed gigantic serpent, known as *Ananta* or Sesha. It is described that this snake is the evolved form of Ahi-budhnya, the serpent connected with Samkarshana-Balarama The *Vishnu Purana* says that then the whole universe is like an ocean. The Supreme God having evoured all beings, sleeps in the laps of the serpent, which is considered to be a non-evolved form of Nature, the totality of the causal stage of consciousness, the eternity of time's endless revolutions. The remainder of the universe is embodied in the serpent floating on the limitless ocean of causal waters and forming the couch on which Vishnu rests. *Sesha* is regarded as the king of the serpent race *nagas*, representing the cycles of time. The *Vishnu Purana* mentions that below this earth in *Patala* or the infernal world , this serpent dwells ruling over the serpents. It is further described in the *Vishnu Purana* that, when Ananta or Endless yawns, he causes the earth to tremble with oceans and forests. *Anant Sesha* was used as the rope twisted around the mountain, Meru, when gods and demons churned the ocean.

In the *Puranas*, Sesha is described as the son of Kasyapa and Kadru. Thus, he is the half-brother of Garuda, wife of Sesha is *Anant Sirsa*, the head of eternity. His hood is *mani-dvipa* or jewel-island. His abode is *mani-mandapa*, or jewel's-palace.

In the temple of Pashupatinath, reclining Vishnu on a canopy of snake is shown at several places. The stone art is marvellous.

Shiva always possesses a snake around his neck. In the phallus worship also a snake is coiled around the *linga*. The interpretation for it is that Shiva is beyond the power of death. The serpent represents the spiral wnich is a symbol of the cycles of time. However, the main meaning attached to the serpent is to represent the basic dormant energy akin to sexual power. The energy source of all spiritual achievements is called *linga Kundalini* (the coiled), the serpent power.

Snakes are entwined with almost every article connected with *linga* worship.

In *Mahabharta*, Shiva is closely associated with serpents. He has a girdle, ear ornaments, sacred thread of snakes and a snake skin as garment. Some Medieval literature describes that when Shiva came to marry Parvati, his mother-in-law was surprised to see snakes hanging on the body of her would be son-in-law.

Some authors have described very aptly that Parvati could not sleep with her husband after marriage as serpents were moving on the bed and were making hissing-sound from Shiva's matted lock. However, a woman who is a true wife and who stays in the midst of such a fearful atmosphere, could serve her husband well.

Sarkar (1974) writes, "It is possible, that the god inhabiting the mountainous region, which is usually infested with serpents and other fierce creatures, has been presented with a strong liking for these animals. It is this association which possibly makes the god wear the skin of a tiger or of an elephant, commonly found in mountain slopes and forests. It is for this association again that the god is himself called the lord of animals (*Pashupati*)."

Nagas have three kings : Vasuki. Taksaka and Shesa. Beautiful image of Vasuki lies in the temple of Vasuki Nath. It is regarded that nagas are descendants of Surabhi (fragment), the fabulous cow, daughter of *Kashyapa*. According to another version *Nagas* are born from Kadru, a daughter of Daksha. In this case, they are considered symbols of the cycle of time.

Nagas live in an underworld called *Nagloka* ; it is known as *patala*, The *Varuna Purana* also says that the three of the lower worlds are known as *patala*, *atala* and *sutala*, which belong to the *nagas*. It is also described in the myths that Arjuna married a *naga* girl, Ulapim.

Vasuki or snake-worship has also become popular in this century. In Nepal, Pratapmalla, a king, built a temple to house the image of Vasuki. Hindus on *Shravana Shukla*, which is the month at the onset of the monsoon, especially worship snakes. Pictures of snakes are pasted on the lintels above the doorways and worshipped in the house of every Hindu. In Nepal, the Newar community observes various religious rites. Various legends are committed to the serpent king noticed in Taudah lake of Kathmandu. There is a common belief that if snakes are worshipped there will be no drought. It is described that Gorakhnath, a saint also worshipped snakes for removing drought. Besides these, there are many references to snake-worship.

"Animals are reckoned among the most sacred objects in Hindu religion".

36

BULL—THE VEHICLE OF SHIVA

Bull is very important in the religion. Bulls have been represented in several places in various forms such as humped, short-humped or humpless. Marshall (1931) mentions that among the Indus Valley civilization, the female element appeared to be coequal with, if not predominating over, the male. In the same civilization, a cow was considered to be of no less importance but a bull was an object of great reverence. Therefore, bulls are looked upon with a feeling of religious respect.

Marshall (1931) has described an interesting picture on a seal of an ithyphallic deity with three faces and a pair of big horns on his head, seated in a Yogic pose and surrounded by wild animals. On the other seals, the deity is flanked by two kneeling devotees on either side with hooded cobras. The deity is described as *Paslupati* or lord of beasts.

The animal power is symbolized in the bull in contrast with the male human spirit. In transitional phases, the male human spirit was also identified with the animal concerned. The artistic quality of depiction is distinguished by a breadth of treatment and feeling for the line and plastic forms which have excelled in the cryptic art.

The social and religious organizations of the Vedic Aryans were based upon the principle of 'paternal' rather than 'maternal' right. Sen (1972) describes that there was a persisting tendency in the character of the Vedic gods to assume the supernatural and transpersonal power of animals. The bull represents totemism also.

The bull is regarded as the secondary *vahana* of Durga, the great mother. Mahesvar , one of the matrikas, possesses a trident in one of her four hands. She wears the crescent moon on her head and rides an ox. Varahi also rides a buffalo. The buffalo was brought to the sacrificial altar to show a sign of victory, over the animal-power by the male divinity. Bhandarkar (1959) describes that such types of sacrifices are known as *Sulagava*. Later on the immolation of bulls was completely forbidden as they were regarded to be god-heads. As such the mode of sacrifice was transformed into the rite of *vrisosarga i.e.* freeing a bull in connection with *pitras* (ancestors).

This is also described in the *Vishnu Purana* that the sacrifice of a cow or a bull or a calf formed a part of the ancient *sradha* ceremony. It was then customary to let a bull be at large instead of being slaughtered. This practice of letting a bull free is still followed on several such occasions.

In the Chalcolithic period, Shiva was regarded as the lord of beasts (*Pashupati*). The bull power was supposed to be complementary to the female generative power which in the ecstasy of joy, as in the Sankhya philosophy of Shiva and Shakti identifies the elements of creation.

According to Chattopadhyaya (1962), during the age of the *Atharva Veda*, the region Mujavat (part of the Western Himalayas) was regarded as the abode of the Mahavrisas, wild-bulls. Venkataramanaya is of opinion that these Mahavrisas had some special connection with Rudra and were known as Mahavrisa, Vrisadvaja (i.e., one who has a bull standard) or Vrisavahana (i.e. one who mounts the bull). The bull is as such identified as an emblem of Shiva.

Vishnu, the bull, fond of bulls, with a bull-like belly, having eyes, forms and acts characteristic of a bull. There is complete identity of Vishnu with the primeval bull.

Krishna has been mentioned in the *Harivansa Purana* as overpowering a demon named Arista who took the form of a mighty bull. Thus, he overpowered this animal. A bull typically represents the virile strength of Vishnu in the conjugal life as Laxhmi, Sri, Prithvi etc. With the idea of the divine origin of kingship, the *Chakravarti Raja* i.e., the chief among kings was developed. Raja Chakravarti is regarded to be the lord of the Earth or Prithvi. The term *Vrisa* is also used for *Raja-Chakravarti*, *Vrisa* is regarded to be a symbol of self-control and resolution.

The importance of the bull lies in the plough which he draws, and represents power of impregnation.

There is a great relationship between the animal and human life and economy. Naturally, the bull had to be domesticated and respected and then worshipped. In this respect, we find the animal getting mention in the religion and getting reverence from the devotees. The bull, being the offspring of the cow, is naturally the most important animal. In Nepal, Shiva is most popular in his '*Pashupati-form*'. *Pashupati* stands for the lord of animals, as the most revered animal, the bull came into his association. There is a very famous legend. It tells that once Shiva was on the verge of defeat in a fight with a bull who was previously an evil spirit. Shiva accepted the overlordship of the animal including his vehicleship, and hence we find it represented together in the art-reliefs. The former sitting on the latter and such relief are known as *Vrishabha-vahana murtis*. Usually, the images of the bulls are kept in front of Shiva temples and he sits on the haunches and his face is so represented that it gives a beautiful posture of reverence to the god. In the Pashupati Temple of Kathmandu, a huge gold-plated image of a bull is kept in a kneeling posture. The bull has also been presented in the dance images of enjoying the dance. Sometimes, even the bull is represented dancing. In some *Keval Shiva-Murti* reliefs, the animal is represented as standing on the back. Sometimes, both Parvati and Shiva ride on the back of a bull.

In the *Alingana murti* of Shiva, the Lord and Paravati sit in close embrace and are engaged in libidinous *maithuna* of each other. At that time there dangling legs generally rest on their vehicles. The bull is shown at the right bottom, and the lion, to the left. Here two animals are sitting in peace and they represent the syncretic philosophy of Nepal, which this country fosters ever since the dawn of civilization.

The bull or Nandi, although, it has a bulky body, is not frightful nor it exhibits fiercencss ; it is characterised by a friendly appearance. Nandi, the milky white bull, is Shiva's animal representation and vehicle in the foreground.

However, Shivas' vedic prototype Rudra is not depicted at any place riding a bull but he is shown on a war-chariot. Vedic Rudra is himself represented as a bull. '*Pashupati*' is the name attributed to Lord Shiva, therefore, bull is represented in absolute relation with him. The bull, therefore, becomes the symbol.

There are several legends about the bull. It is said that white bull which serves as Shiva's banner was given to him by Daksha, the divine sage. This bull was very characteristic. It had broad shoulders, sleek sides, black tail, thick neck, horns hard as adament and hump like the summit of snowy mountain. It had golden complexion.

In one script Shiva himself explains to Parvati as to why he has choosen a bull as his mount. According to it, "Shiva says that there was once a quarrel among the bulls in Heaven and when he settled the dispute, Brahma gave him the best of the bulls saying that, that should be hence forward his mount".

The worship of the bull is mentioned in the *Tantras* together with the Dikpalas (Quarter deities) in the installation of Shiva *linga*. The bull is also worshipped as Shiva. Being the vehicle of Shiva the bull itself is considered divine. The bull is also represented on the coins of Nepal. In the Pashupati coins of Lichhavi and Thakuri dynasties of Nepal on the obverse side, figures of humped bulls standing to the left are shown. In one of the coins, a recumbent bull to the left side is shown. The change in the type of a standing bull to recumbent one is connected with Shankar Deva and probably with Dharam Deva, the grand-father and great grand-father of Mana Deva.

Dharam Deva dedicated a Nandi at Pashupati. Licchavis introduced standing bull type coins. The bull depicted was of a humped type. In some coins, the bull stands to the right while in others to the left. According to some *Vamsavalis* Shankar Deva dedicated *Vrishabha dhvaja* (Flag with a bull). The rare coins of Jishnu Gupta who succeeded Amsuvarman has a bull on the obverse side while the reverse shows Nandipada and trident.

In Nepalese coins struck by some kings, *vahanas* are also represented but secondary to *Yantra* which is emblematic of the divinity for achieving certaiṇ objects.

Religious merit is also attached in dedicating *vahanas* either in stone or metal to gods.

Denielou (1963), describes that the vehicle of Shiva is a bull known as *Vrasa* or *Vrisabha*. It is as white as snow with a gigantic body and soft brown eyes. It has a thick neck, and its horns are very hard, similar to diamond. The sharp red points tear up the earth. The Mahabharata says that this bull was given by Daksha, father-in-law of Shiva, at the time of his marriage-rituals. The bull is also depicted on Shiva's banner. The bull is considered to be sex-impulse. Shiva rides a bull. Only those can ride a bull, who have attained knowledge and are masters of their impulses. Those who ride the bull have the power of transmitting the physical life.

It is regarded that sex energy is the very thing which man can utilize for the conquest of his own self. It is definite that the sexually powerful man, if he controls himself, can get any form of power ; he can even conquer the celestial worlds. The bull of Shiva is also called *Nandi* or joyful or *Nandikesvara* or Lord of gladness. Worshippers touch Nandi or his testicle as they are regarded as the source of energy and life. The sun is also represented in the form of a bull as it procreates all living things and the Sun also is the lord of creation.

In the *Atharva Veda*, the lightening has been compared with the tongue of a mighty ox. The *Vedas* also emphasise its power of transferring every potent and propitious light. The birth of Buddha was on the full moon day of the *Vaisakha* in the Zodiacal sign of Taurus ; Hindus call this sign as *Vrisha* i.e., bull. A bull is traditionally associated with Hindu gods for its sexual virility. However, in Buddhism this virility is sublimated in the form of spiritual power.

Hindus also worship live bulls. In Nepal, bulls are worshipped and offered food in the temples of Pashupatinath and in other places. The live bulls are invested with an appearance of sanctity of branding them on the right quarter with a design of *trishula* (trident), representing Shiva's weapon. These sacred bulls are allowed complete liberty and are never roped. They can roam, eat and graze where-ever they like. They are also worshipped publicly. Nepalese touch the back of these animals with great reverence. When any of these bulls dies, the last rites are performed in a grand style.

"Animals are worshipped by Hindus as they are pre-eminently valuable to them. Animals are their companions in labour and on which they rely to carry on all their agricultural work which is source of wealth."

"The animastic belief of man has its root deep in the past. The primitive man had believed in the superior power of animals and this belief led to the animal worship."

37

ABODES OF BLISS OR PARADISES

Hindu philosophy conceptualises several pleasant retreats, but the main ones are usually four in number. While making various delineations, we have made references to abodes of bliss or paradises which might sometimes confuse the general readers. Therefore, it is deemed essential to describe them.

According to the Hindu scriptures, the four Abodes of Bliss are : *Swarga*, *Kailasha*, *Vaikuntha* and *Satyaloka*. The first of these Abodes is Indra's paradise, the second is Shiva's, the third Vishnu's and the fourth Brahma's.

As the scriptures say, these pleasant retreats or abodes of bliss represent Mount *Maha Meru* on the slopes of which they are situated. This mountain is considered to be in the form of a cone, convoluted like a snail's shell and divided into stages. The first stage on the north side is *Swarga*, the second stage is *Kailasha*, at a still higher stage on the south side is *Vaikuntha* and ultimately at the summit of the mountain is *Satya-loka*.

Although in this book we are mainly concerned with Shiva, at several places in the text we have referred to the virtuous rewards of the holy persons; therefore, it will not be out of place to mention here some of the salient features of each of the four abodes of bliss.

Swarga or Indra's Paradise

This abode of bliss is inhabited by the deities of the second rank who are considered to be the progeny of Kashyapa and his first wife, Aditi. Indra is the eldest son of Kashyapa, the saint. He is the king of the realm of delight also known as Amravati. His majestic palace is at the centre of this abode. There is another palace of splendour and beauty for *Sati*, his wife who is the daughter of Puloma. Their son is Jayanta, who also lives in Indraloka.

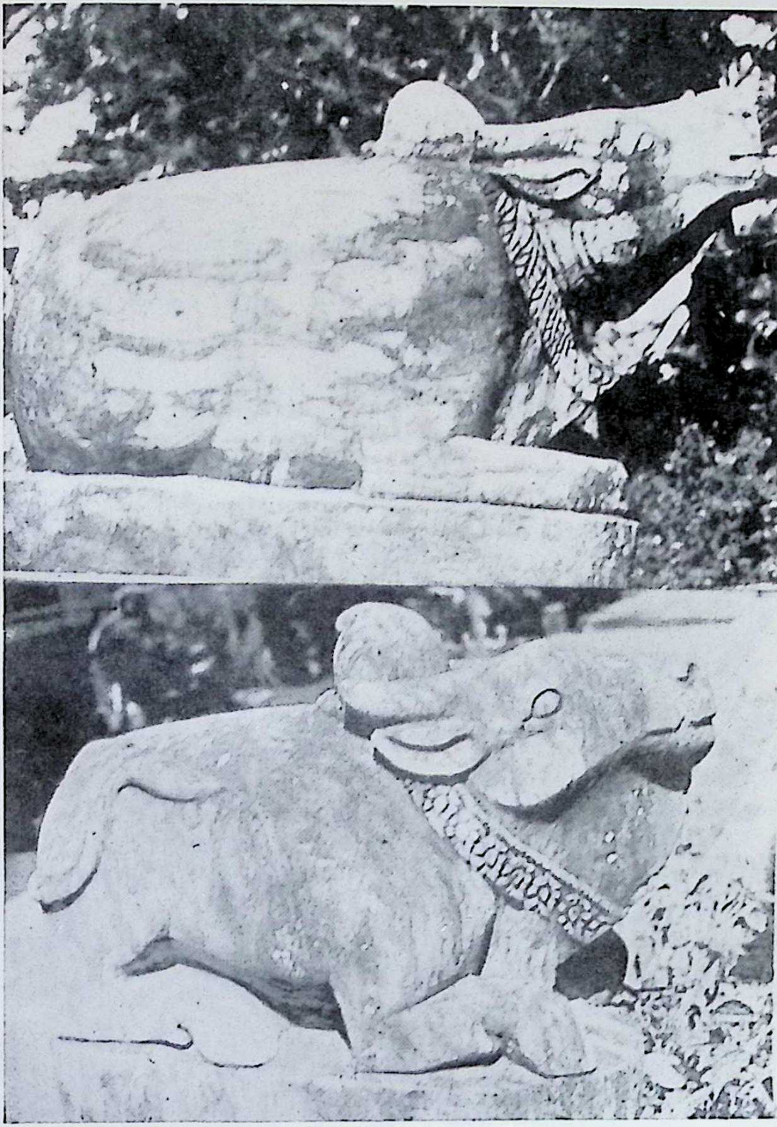
This paradise has certain unique features. *Kalpa taru*, the tree of eternity or the famous boon-giving tree, also stands in the garden of Indra. The fruit of this tree has an exquisite kind of flavour and provides good nourishment to the deities in the paradise. The Kalpa tree grows upto a height of ten *yojans* (each *yojan* literally means a distance of about 14·4 km). This tree has the power of gratifying all desires of persons who pin their faith in it. It is the symbol of plenty, prosperity and happiness. The fruit of this tree is considered to have the power of granting immortality.

There is a cow named *Kamdhenu*. She is also known for her kindness and generosity. It provides butter and milk to those who show sincere faith and devotion to it. There are limpid waters of several rivers, the most important of which is the *Mandakini*.

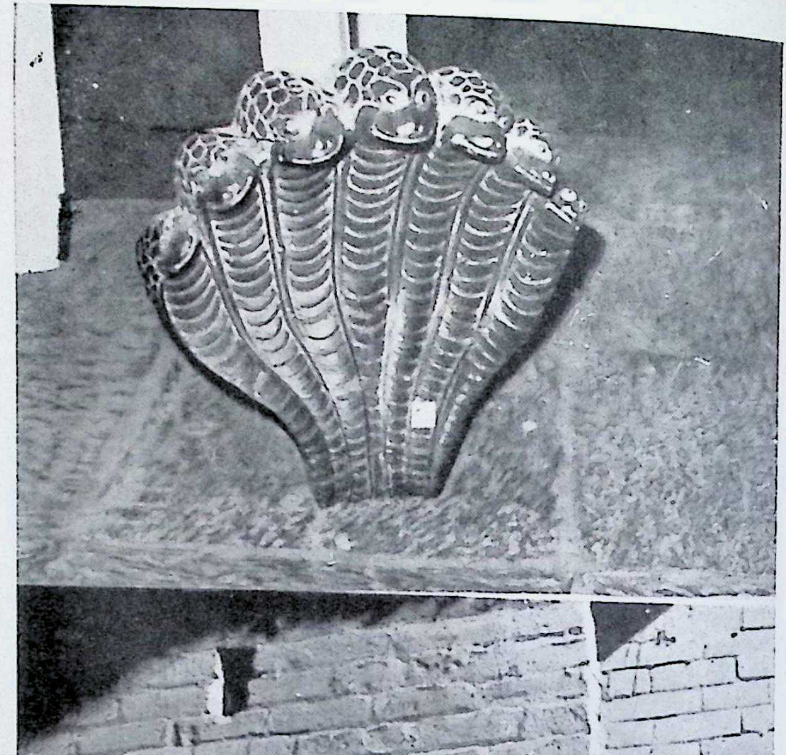
There are many dancing girls or *apsaras*. The dwellers in this abode are refreshed by the rhythmical and sensuous movements of the dancing girls. *Gandharvas* are the famous musicians. Brhispati is the *guru* or teacher who explains the *Vedas* to them. Ashvini and Kumars are the physicians. The *Asta dıkpalas* are the inhabitants of Indraloka. Nine planets are also there and from there they shine on this world.

Kailasha : Shiva's abode

It is a zone which is situated on a triangular plane. It is called Kailasha or *Parvata* (mountain . It is a very charming place. Shiva is the master of this city. He rules and resides with his beautiful consort Parvati. Carnal pleasures are common in this abode of bliss. Ganesh and Kumar (Kartikeya) are their sons. Both of them possess great strength. Ganesh who is the elder, is the lord and leader of



Bulls or Nandis in devotion.



Snake Symbolism.

ghosts who rally round. Ganesh is also called the lord and remover of obstacles (*Vighnesvara*). He is worshipped for wisdom, pleasure, happiness and intelligence. Kartikeya is called Kumar in Nepal and is the commander of the celestial army.

Shiva has a large number of courtiers in the person of evil spirits. Nandi, the bull is the chief of them. Other lieutenants are Bringi, Bhima and Kadurgita, which have frightful countenances. *Kailash* is looked after by Bhairava, Bima and Darshana.

The people are scared of the various kinds of evil spirit which indulge in various mischievous acts. Shiva consumes liquor and also indulges in sensuality. He rides the bull, his personal vehicle.

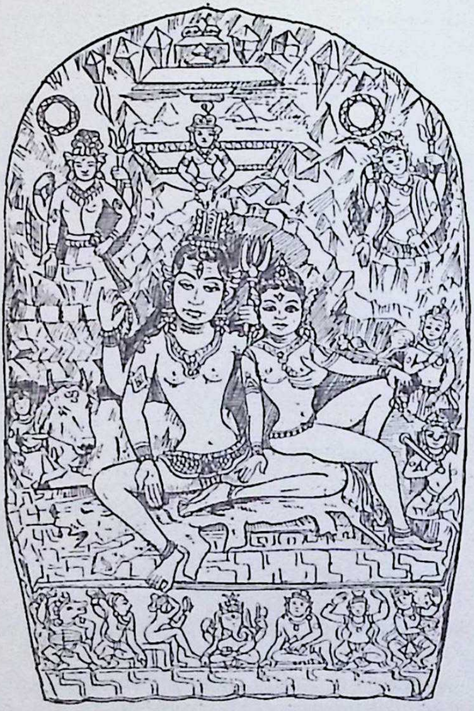
The paradise of *Kailash* is reserved for the followers of Shiva and for those who worship the *lingam*. It abounds with flowers, trees, birds, quadrupeds etc. Several rivers meander there in all directions. Several penitents live here and spend a happy and peaceful life. Scriptures mention that Kailash is located in its earthly representation in Nepal.

Vaikuntha, the Paradise of Vishnu

It is reserved for the devotees of Vishnu. It is situated above Kailasha and is regarded as the most charming abode as the word *Vaikuntha* literally means pleasant. Gold and precious objects are found here. There is a palace in which Vishnu lives with his consort Lakshmi. Their eldest son is Pradyumna and their grandson is Aniruddha, whose wife is Usha, daughter of Bana. This region abounds with wild life.

Satyalok, the Paradise of Brahma

It is the place of Truth or the 'Abode of Virtue'. It is regarded as the highest of the Abodes of Bliss. Here Brahma lives with his wife Saraswati. The Ganges waters this divine retreat and from here the water reaches the earth. It is reserved for those Brahmans who practise virtue on this earth. Persons of other castes even though they have lived a religiously pure life are excluded from it.



Uma-maheshwara, a beautiful sculpture

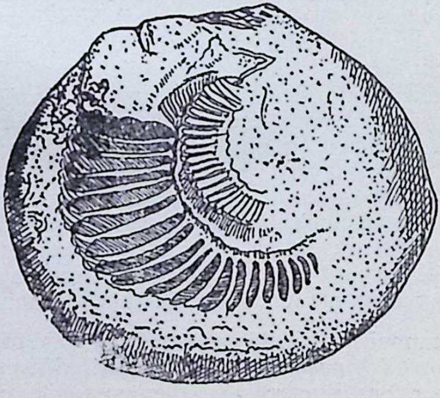
"The beauty and environment of Kailash remind one of Homer's Olympus the abode of Jupiter".

"Hindus believe that each man is characterised by one of the three qualities : Truth (*Satta*), passion (*Rajas*), ignorance (*Tamas*) which ever of these qualities falls to man's lot is not arbitrary but is intrinsically the one he deserves and is in confirmity with his deeds in previous existence; it influences him in all the actions of his life".

38

SHALIGRAMA-THE SYMBOL OF SHIVA ALSO

Shaligrama is a sort of fossilized ammonite. Though it is regarded as symbolic of metamorphoses of Lord Vishnu, it bears at the same time the essence of all other deities including Lord Shiva. Shaligrama worship encompasses all the Gods. Shaligrama is found nowhere else in the world except in Nepal. When a devotee visits Pashupatinath, he gets thrilled at the sight of these amazing but hallowed stones. For the curious minds, naturally it will not be out of place to write some thing in brief about Shaligrama here.



Shaligrama, an ammonite

Shaligrama is by and large oval, striated, umbilicated and

and ornamented with arborizations on the outside. If these tree-like markings are numerous, this stone is regarded to be more rare and hence more venerable. It is black in colour and is regarded as holy throughout Nepal and India. It is found exclusively in the Kali Gandaki river of Nepal. The stone is generally regarded to be a form of Lord Vishnu. Its origin is described in detail in the *Skanda Purana*. It is obligatory for every Hindu to keep atleast one Shaligrama in the worship room in the house. These stones are often handed down from father to son. They are regarded as a part of precious paternal property. They should never be given away to others. It is described in the *Atharva Veda* that a Brahman's house without Shaligrama is polluted. Even the food cooked in such a house is as polluted and unclean as the food thrown up by a dog.

The workship and *puja* offered to *Shaligrama* goes not only to Vishnu but to all the deities. To drink some water with which *Shaligrama* is washed has a most salubrious effect in washing away sins. For deliverance from sins, a touch of this sanctified water is simply sufficient. It bestows perpetual wealth and forgiveness and will also grant health and happiness to the devotee. The worshippers of *Shaligrama* always get happiness in the world and will do the right things. After his death, he will enjoy the delights of *Swarga* or Heaven. Hindus drink the water in which *Shaligrama* is washed along with prayers. During the *puja* of *Shaligrama*, it is washed in *Panchamrita* prepared from five things—curd, *ghee* (purified butter), honey, milk and sugar. The prayer runs as follows, "Narayana, you are the ruler of the world. It is your pleasure to confer blessings on all created beings. I drink this water with which your sacred feet have been washed ; I drink it that I may be cleansed from my sins ; I request you to pardon me for all the sins I have committed".

As this ammonite is considered to be symbolic of Vishnu himself and Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) as the wife of Vishnu Tulsi Plant, therefore, is married to the ammonite once in a year.

Shaligrama is found in the *Kali Gandaki* or the Krishna Ganga in Muktinath. Muktinath is one of the great sanctuaries in the Nepal-Himalays. It can be reached in one day by trekking from Jomsom which again can be reached by plane. From Jomsom there is trek of about 3·2 km. to reach a small township called Kagbeni. Muktinath is about 10 Km. from the south east of Kagbeni and in that small track one has to ascend not less than 12250 ft. in altitude. The temple of Muktinath is dedicated to Vishnu and is one of the four great places of Hindu sanctity in Nepal. This is visited by people of both Shaivite and Vishunuite faith. The temple is a very sacred one as that of Pashupatinath. The senior author (T.C.M.) confirms the views expressed by the earlier pilgrims that it is easy to get *mukti* (salvation) but it is difficult to undertake the arduous and often fatal expedition to Muktinath. Though the journey is hard and risky there is nothing that can check the undaunted devoted pilgrims from visting it. It is this place where the Kali Gandaki originates from 108 sacred springs. The magnitude of the Kali Gandaki is great at Kagbeni where people give oblations to manes. Kagbeni is the confluence of two rivulets which joins to form the Kali Gandaki. One rivulet coming from Muktinath is considered to be the most sacred. It is this spot where Shaligrama is found in remarkable abundance in the water of Kali Gandaki.

There is a popular belief in Nepal that large beads of *Rudrakasha* are very effective. Once a saint was pouring on a tree of *Elaeocarpus* (*Rudrakasha*) the water in which he was immersing *Shaligrama.* The tree yielded very big fruits and seeds. A few rosaries of those large beads are available in Nepal. These beads are called *Rudra-runde*.

"Hindus have included objects of all the three Kingdoms of Nature so as to arrive the total of three hundred and thirty millions of deities, which they recognize".

39

HOW TO REACH KATHMANDU

Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal and the abode of Lord Pashupatinath can be reached by two modes—by road and by air.

BY ROAD :

Regular bus services are available from the following points :—

1. From *Birgang*
2. From *Bhairawa*
3. From *Kakarbhita*
4. From *Biratnagar*.
5. From *Janakpur*.

From Birganj :

Raxaul is the terminal railway station in India for entry to Nepal from Birganj. One can reach Raxaul from Lucknow via Sonpur-Muzzafarpur and Sugauli. Raxaul can also be reached by regular deluxe and ordinary buses from Muzaffarpur. For reaching Muzaffarpur one can also use trains bound for Assam. From Patna (Mahendru Ghat) also one can reach Muzaffarpur by steamer upto Paleza ghat. From Paleza ghat to Raxaul train services are available. From Raxaul to Birganj which is about a distance of 3 Km. rickshaws and taxis are available. Birganj is in Nepal territory. From Birganj to Kathmandu it is about 180 km. The bus plies from Birga j-Jitpur-Simra - Amlekhganj - Hetaura - Bhainse-Mahabir-Kalitar-Daman-Palung- Tistung-Khanikhola-Naubise-Thankot-Kathmandu. The bus fare is Rs. 35·45 for minibus service and for other buses it is Rs. 29·75. Two mini buses and six ordinary buses usually ply from Birganj to Kathmandu.

From Bhairawa :

For reaching Bhairawa one has to come to Gorakhpur. Train service is available from Lucknow to Gorakhpur and onwards to Nautanwa.

Buses are also available from Gorakhpur to Nautanwa. From Nautanwa to Bhairawa it is about 1 km. Rickshaw and bus services are available. Bhairawa is in Nepal territory. Regular buses are available from Bhairwa to Kathmandu. Some buses are direct and some terminate at Pokhara where connection for Kathmandu is easily available. Bhairva-Butwal-Tansen-Walung-Pokhra-Damoli- Majua Kherani- Mugling-Benighat-Galsi-Naubise-Kathmandu. The bus fare from Bhairwa to Kathmandu by Mini Bus is Rs. 74, by Ordinary Bus Rs. 55.50.

From Pokhara Mini bus Rs. 38 00

Ordinary bus. Rs. 27.00.

Mini-buses also ply on all these routes and are more comfortable and fast. They take 8 hours from Bhairawa to Pokhara and another 7½ hrs. from Pokhara to Kathmandu.

From Kakarbhita :

Tourists coming from Assam or Bengal of India may take this route. Buses are available from Kakarbhita to Kathmandu. From Siliguri (Assam) to Kakarbhita it takes about one hour by taxi service. Siliguri can be reached by any train servicing Assam side in India. Kakarbhita is in Nepal territory. It takes about 16 hrs. to come by bus from Kakarbhita to Kathmandu. The route followed is the same as that of Biratnagar *i.e.*, Kakarbhita-Kanchanbari-Itahari-Kathmandu. The Bus fare is at present Rs. 75/60 paisa.

Rs. 100 Indian currency=145 Nepalese currency (Jan. 1981 conversion rates).

Timings, fare and conversion rates change very often. Authors have given this information just to give some idea to the pilgrims. Sometimes unscheduled conveyance are also available. Besides Airfare, embarkations charges are also charged.

From Biratnagar :

Biratnagar can be reached via Jogbani. Jogbani is the end point in India for entry to Nepal through Biratnagar. From Jogbani, Biratnagar can be reached in a rickshaw or taxi. From Biratnagar through buses are available to Kathmandu. Biratnagar-Itahari-Patlia-Kathmandu.

Buses from Biratnagar have the following important stoppages :

Itari-Rupni-Bharda-Lahan - Dhalkewar - Bagmati-Nijoh-Patlia-Hetauda-Bhainse-Naubise-Kathmandu. Bus takes about 11 hours and the bus fare is Rs. 75/-

From Janakpur :

Janakpur is one of the holy places of Nepal where saint king Janak ruled, where Sita or Janaki was born.

Janakpur can be reached by bus from Muzaffarpur (Bihar)-Sitamarhi-Bhathamor-Janakpur. The bus takes about 3 hours.

Janakpur can also be reached from Samastipur (Bihar) by train via Darbhanga. The train line ends at Jayanagar from where you catch train in Nepal side. It takes about 5½ hours. Three buses ply at present from Janakpur to Kathmandu. The important stops for Kathmandu bound buses from : Janakpur are Dhalkewar-Bagmati-Nijgarh-Bagmati-Patlia-Hetauda-Bhainse-Naubise-Kathmandu.

The bus fare is Rs. 42.60. Time taken is about 11 hours. At present no mini-buses ply along this route.

BY AIR

Travelling can be made by two types of Airlines. By *Royal Nepal Airlines* or by International Airlines.

BY ROYAL NEPAL AIR LINES (DOMESTIC)

One can fly by Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation (RNAC) from the following points :—

From Birganj (Simra)-Flight of 25 minutes. Flights by Twin Otters and Avro Aircraft.

Simra-Kathmandu

Daily Flight 12.45, Duration of Flight 25 minutes, Fare Rs. 205.00 N.C.

From Bhairawa. Daily regular flight is available from Bhairawa to Kathmandu direct. Daily flight duration of flight—45 minutes. Departure 15.15 fare ; Rs. 310 N.C. (By Avro-Twin otter).

From Pokhra. Regular flights can be taken from Pokhra to Kathmandu. Time 11.00 Duration of flight 35 minutes, Fare Rs. 215.00 NC (By Avro/Twin otter).

From Biratnagar. Daily regular flights operate from Biratnagar to Kathmandu.

Time 11.5 ; Duration of flight one hour (Avro-Twin otter), Fare Rs. 390.00 N.C.

BY INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS :

Airlines from the neighbouring countries *viz.*, India, Burma, Bangladesh and Thailand operate from and to Kathmandu, besides the national flag carrier, Royal Nepal airlines. There is no American, Far Eastern or European Airlines operating in Nepal.

COMING FROM WEST :

From Delhi. Non-stop air services between Delhi and Kathmandu are operated by RNAC and Indian Airlines (I.A) under a pool agreement. Endorsement is required by the issuing carrier in favour of its pool partner. However, it is sometimes embarassing and can be refused also. The flight takes an average of about 1 hour 5 minutes by jet. RNAC operates a daily flight with Boeing 727. Indian Airlines (I.A.) operates one flight with Boeing 737. In addition to this, I A. also operates a flight from Delhi to Kathmandu with stops at Agra, Khajurao and Varanasi. This flight takes about 4 hours and 20 minutes, all stops included.

The Air-fare from Delhi to Kathmandu for this stop-over flight is the same as that for the non-stop flight, In the stop-over flight one can stay for 24 hrs. in each of these most famous places of Agra, Khajuraho and Varanasi.

RNAC. Daily Boeing 727-Deparatute from New Delhi at 8.5., Fare 1070 Nepalese currency (NC) (Duration of flight 1 hour 5 minutes) **I.A.** Daily Boeing 737 ; Departure from New Delhi 9.30

Duration of flight 1 hour and 5 minutes, Fare Rs. 1070.00 N.C. (to be paid in Indian currency)

I.A. Delhi-Agra-Khajuraho-Varanasi-Kathmandu. Departure Delhi 7.85. Duration of Flight 4 hrs and 20 mts. Boeing 737, Fare 1070.00 (to be paid in equivalents of Indian currency)

COMING FROM SOUTH :

From Calcutta :

I.A., Thai International and Union of Burma Airlines. At present, RNAC is not operating on this line.
Thai International D.C. 12.
Indian Airlines Boeing 737.
Union of Burma Airlines.
The flight takes about 1 hour 5 minutes.
I.A. Time 12.10, Duration 1 hr.
On Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Fare-710.00 (NC).

Thai. Departure 10.0 ; Duration of flight 1 hour, on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday Fare Rs. 710.00 (NC)

U.B.A. Tuesday and Saturday-Duration 1 hour. Fare 710 Airport tax is 100 I.C. half for national of neighbouring countries.

From Colombo :

2 weekly Non-stop flights by RNAC on Saturday and Wednesday. The flight takes about 3 hours 30 minutes. The fare is $ 180.00.

From Patna :

2 Daily flights. 1. By RNAC and 1 by I.A. (By 737 Boeing). I.A. Boeing 737, Departure 11.45 on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Departure 12.55, on other days Rs. 365. N.C. (Duration of time 35 minutes). RNAC-Daily-11.30 (Duration 45 minutes) Avro. Fare 365 N.C.

From Varanasi. 1 Daily flight by Indian Airlines.
I.A. Boeing 737, Departure 11.30 ; Time duration 35 minutes ; Fare 520 N.C.

COMING FROM EAST :

From Bangkok. 8 Flights a week, 4 each by RNAC and by Thai International respectively. RNAC operates non-stop service which takes about 3 hours and 50 minutes. Thai International operates on Monday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday with half an hour stop at Calcutta. The fare is $365.00 (2178 N.C.).

Union of Burma Airways also links Bangkok with Kathmandu changing of aircraft is to be done at Rangoon and an intermediary stop at Calcutta.

From Dacca. There are 3 flights a week operated by Bangladesh Biman. Time taken in the flight is 2 hours 20 minutes. The flights are on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, at 12.00. The air fare is Rs. 977.00

From Rangoon. Two weekly flights are run by Union of Burma Airways which takes about 3 hours 25 minutes. The flights are on Tuesday at 7·00 a.m. while on Saturday it is at 11.00. The Air Fare is $200·00

CHARTERED FLIGHTS :

Kathmandu is not linked by chartered flights except on some occasions by T.W.A. charters. However, many chartered flights link Delhi or Bangok from European cities. From these places, Kathmandu can be reached.

Several unscheduled flights also operate between Delhi and Kathmandu.

"Hindu believe that whatever is written on the basis of their past deeds in their fates it is not in their powers to efface'·

40

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"Hindu faith is capable of offering successful resistance to the inroads of corrupt influences ; For instance fear of punishment in store for the wicked in hell, hope of reward extended to the blessed in the paradise and the doctrine of metempsychosis, which grants to man who is not altogether vicious, the prospect of a new birth more or less advantageous to the present one in proportion to his good deeds would be so many incentives which if inculcated in the minds of the people by learned scholars would surely contribute to bring them back into the path of righteousness."

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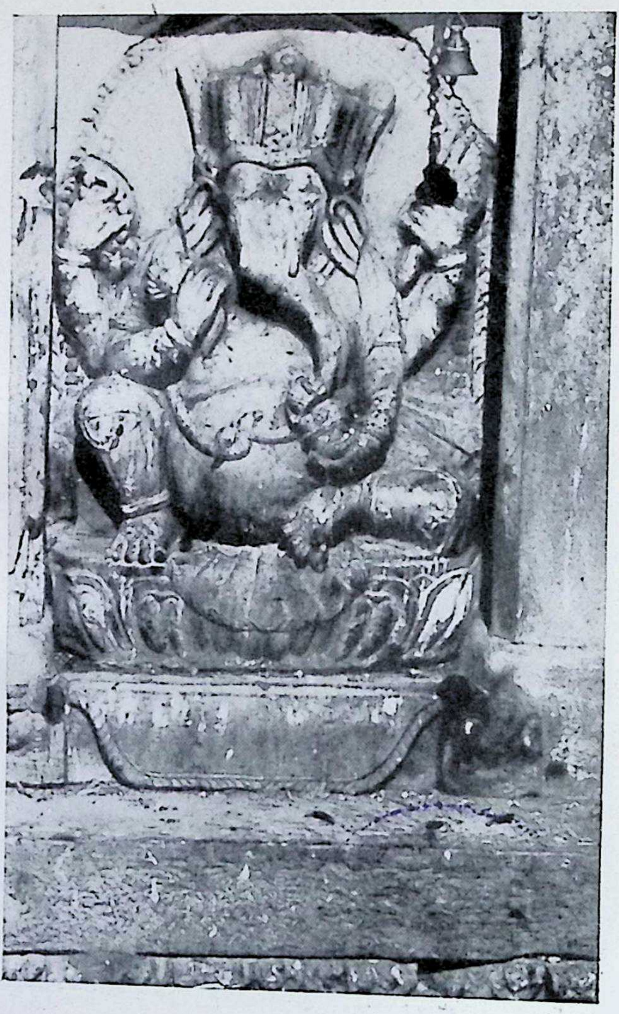
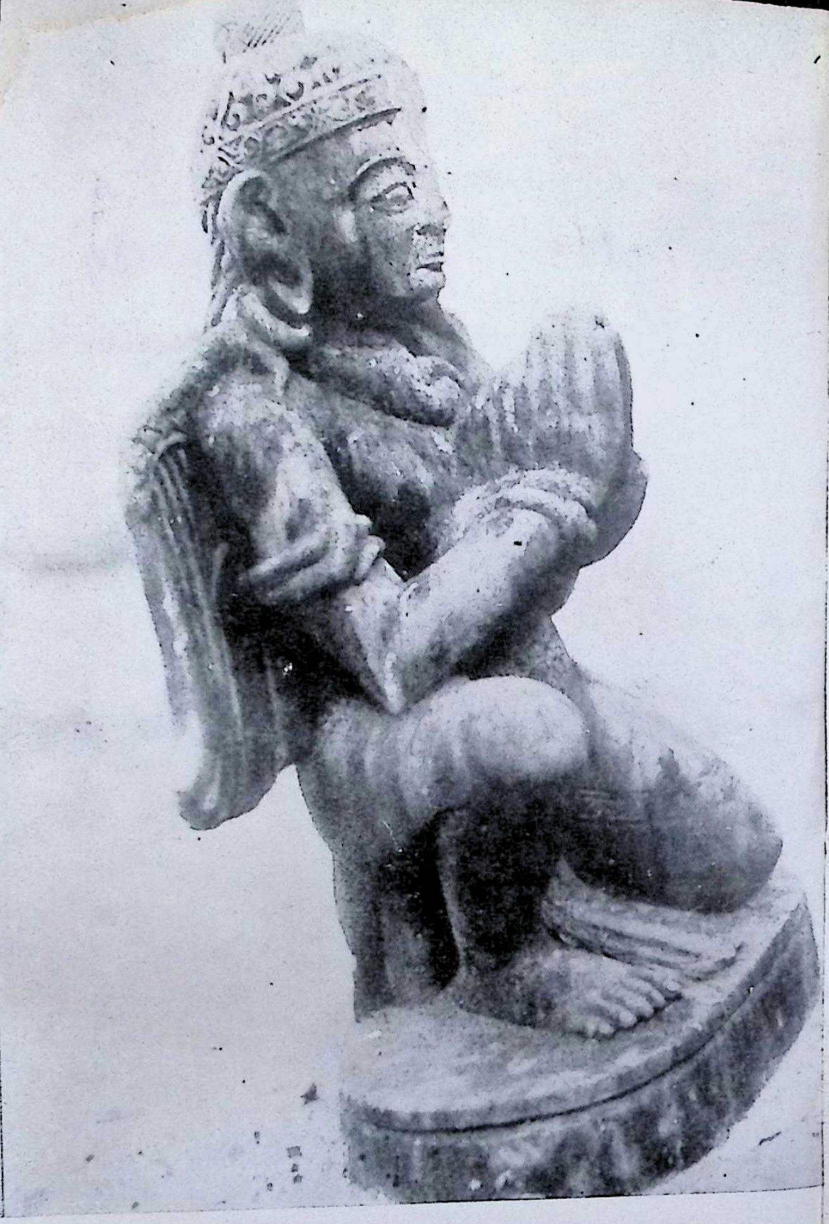


Ganesh, Lord of wisdom and son of Shiva.



Garuda in devotional pose infront of
Rajrajeshwari Temple complex.